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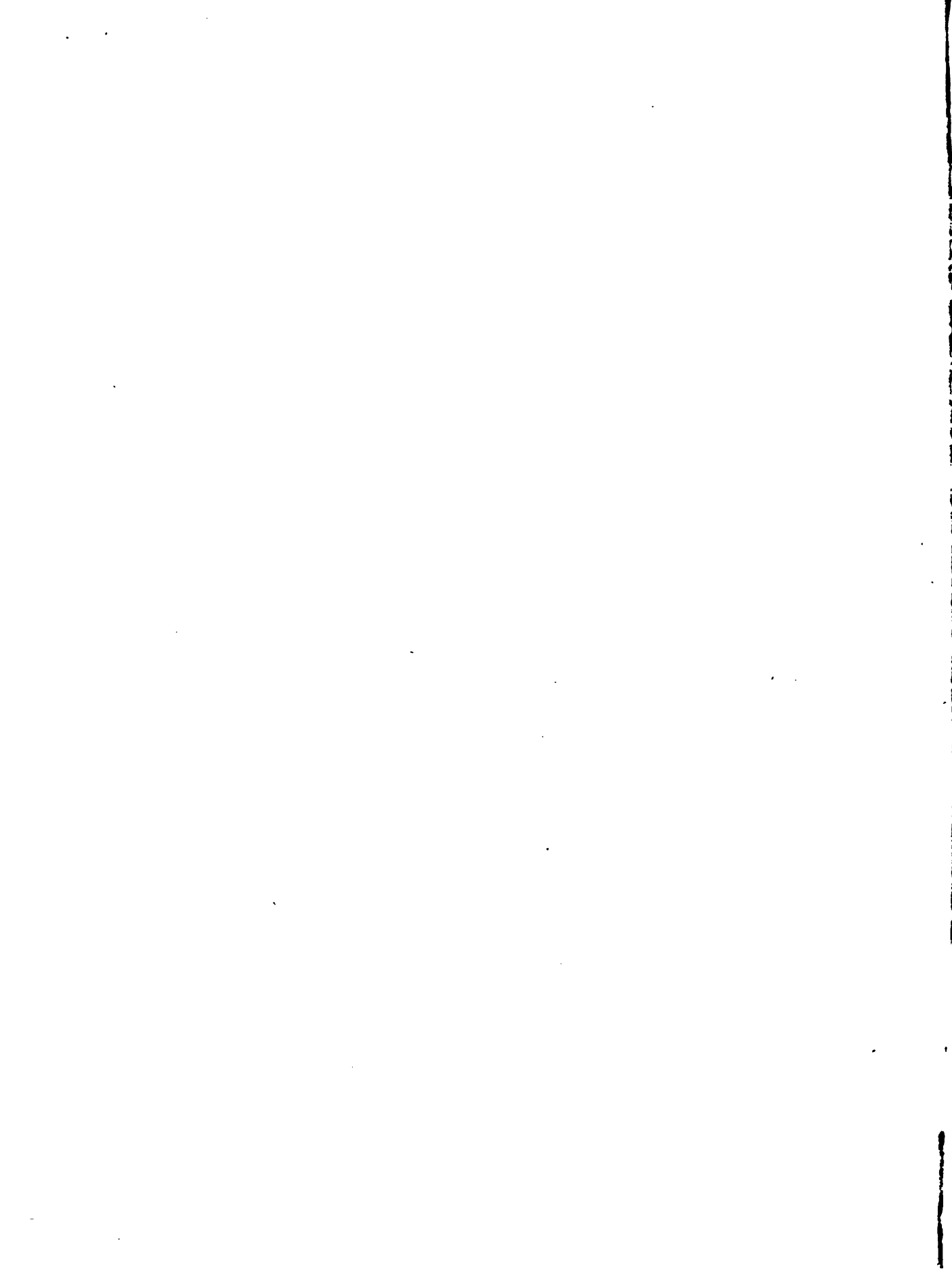
# OUR NORTHERN DOMAIN

ALASKA  
PICTURESQUE  
HISTORIC AND  
COMMERCIAL









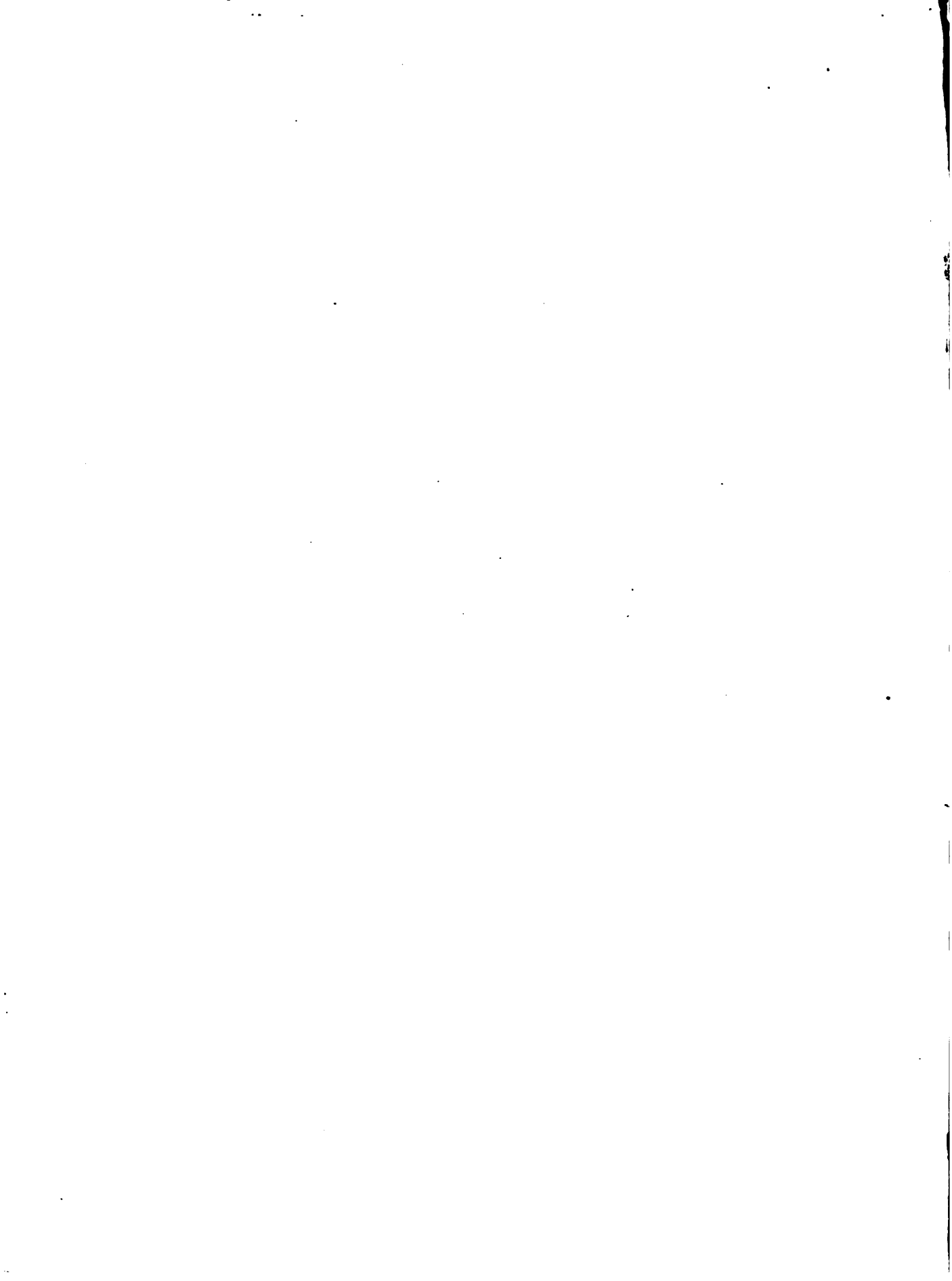
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NATIVE ALASKAN NEEDLEWOMAN.







# Our Northern Domain

**ALASKA**  
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AND COMMERCIAL

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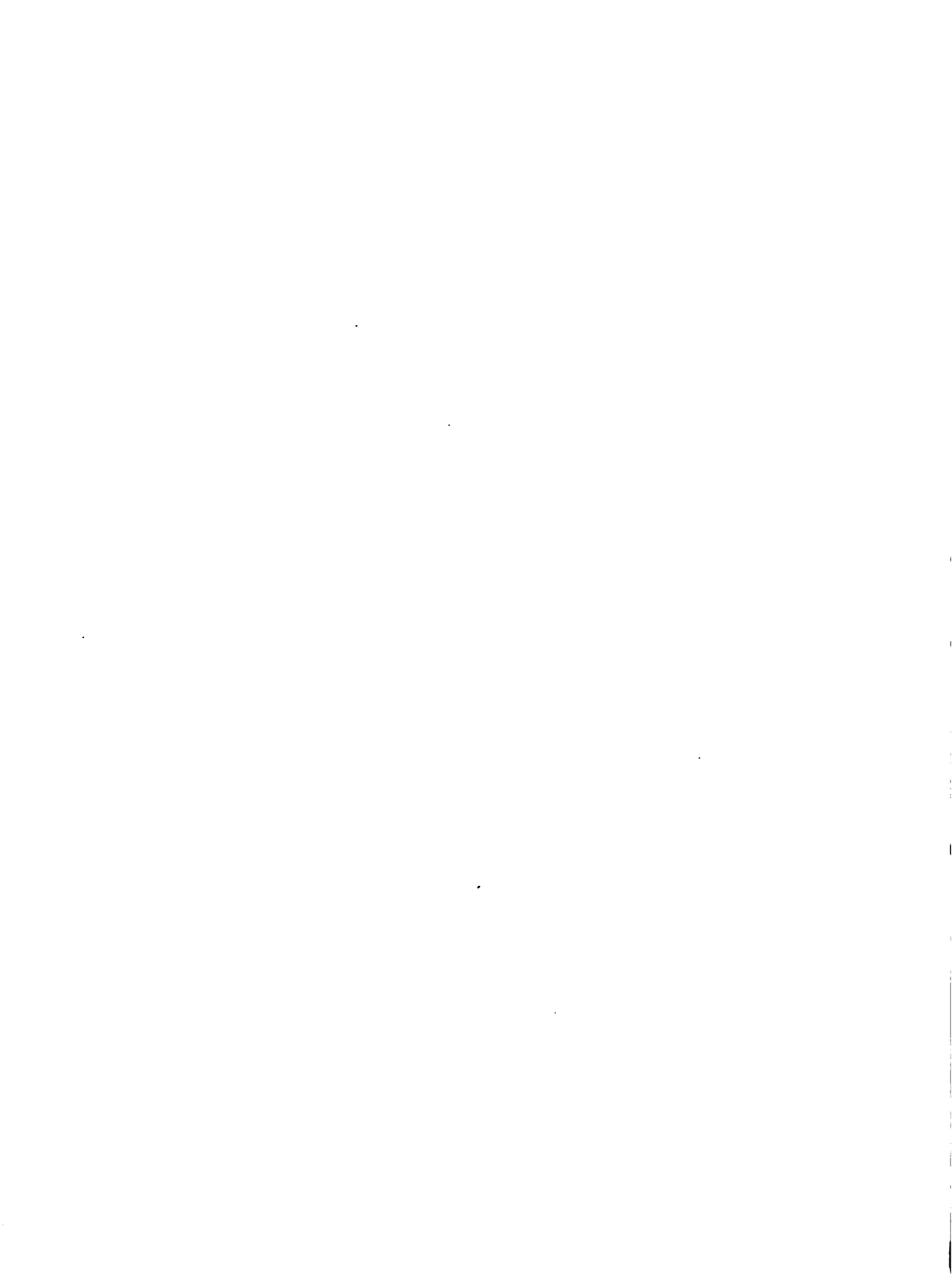
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# OUR NORTHERN DOMAIN.

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## ALASKA.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### A FLOUTED GIFT.

**T**HE fairy-godmother, in the old folk-story, brings the new-born infant a crooked coin, even more than insignificant in appearance; but it has miraculous powers, and when put to the test, multiplies into a fortune. Aladdin's lamp had nothing in its external aspect to indicate that when rubbed it would summon the aid of the all-powerful Djinn to reveal unmeasured riches. Such a gift, at first despised and ridiculed, seemed to be the great land of Alaska, which, instead of consisting wholly of glaciers and icebergs, as was at first generally supposed from its situation in the far north, has proved to be an El Dorado of fabulous value.

It is rather amusing and instructive, in view of the stream of gold and other precious products, pouring in an ever-increasing volume from Alaska's horn of plenty, to recall some of the predictions and comments that were made, in the newspapers and in Congress, when the proposed purchase of this imperial domain from Russia was under discussion.

In the debate of July, 1868, the Hon. Hiram Price of Iowa, in the House of Representatives, after animadverting on the Hon. N. P. Banks's eloquent plea in favor of Alaska, said:—



“ By a movement as quick and a change as sudden as ever was produced by Aladdin’s lamp, we were standing upon the margins of the inlets, bays, and water courses of Alaska. There the gentleman from Massachusetts pointed out to me the fish with which these waters swarm; no sir, I beg pardon, not swarm; there is no room for them to swarm; they are piled up, fish upon fish, pile upon pile — solid columns of fish; no human arithmetic can compute their numbers. And, sir, such fish — shad, salmon, cod, — according to the description, a foot and over through the shoulders, with sides and tails to match. As I stood there, Mr. Chairman, listening to the gentleman from Massachusetts, with fish to the right of me, fish to the left of me, fish all in front of me, rolling and tumbling, I had to acknowledge that the picture as painted made Alaska a good country for fish.” He declared that he was almost ready to embrace “ the creations of this splendid fancy,” until, on sober second thought, stripping it of the “ trimming and tinselry in which his imagery had clothed it,” there remained “ nothing but a cold, forbidding, ghastly, grinning skeleton,” from which he “ turned with horror and disgust.” From all that he could learn, Alaska was, in the language of an impartial historian, “ very mountainous and volcanic, with a climate intensely cold, and a sterile soil.” He ended by claiming that Russia ought to be allowed to remain in peaceable possession of Alaska in all her hideous proportions and native cheerlessness, with her icebergs, her volcanoes, her three hundred and sixty days in the year of clouds and storms, her harbors, streams, Indians, and fish.

Mr. Schenck of the House declared that he had never felt his imagination worked upon to the extent of according to the bargain that had been made, anything like the value which other gentlemen seemed to find in it. “ Perhaps,” he said, “ if anything could reconcile myself, or any man, to the acquisition of the Alaska territory, it might be found in the weather under which we are now suffering, and that probably is a more earnest argument in its favor than almost anything else I can find in my mind.” That was July 14th, 1868.



STREET SCENE, KETCHIKAN, ALASKA.

to you  
ALBERTA

Mr. Williams of Pennsylvania called it "a miserable property." He went on, in a flow of sarcastic eloquence, which was amusing then, but almost pathetic now: "Never, indeed, in the annals of imposture, has anything been witnessed so reckless and audacious in the way of invention as the statements which have been manufactured to accomplish this object. By a miracle as stupendous as that of Joshua when he held the sun spellbound on Gibeon and the moon in the Valley of Ajalon, the very laws of nature — the same to which the honorable Chairman so confidently refers — are not only suspended but overturned at the bidding of the wizard Secretary. The pen of the mercenary scribe is enlisted to furnish material for the statesman. The Sybilline leaves of these oracular personages, this hireling priesthood of the press, descend in showers like the snowflakes that load the atmosphere of this promised land. The icy barriers, before which even the giant power that had cleft its way through the snows of Siberia to the shores of the Arctic Ocean, were obliged to recoil, giving way at once. The frozen rivers bare their flowing bosoms to the embraces of a tropic sun, and the rugged and inaccessible mountains sink down incontinently into the verdant shore and the grassy plain. And young America, always susceptible, — yes, and very old America, too, listen and believe. Already they hear, or think they hear, the screams of the American eagle from the peak of St. Elias, and as their eyes are skilfully directed to the exiled banner of the Union drooping desolately from its staff amid the perpetual rains of Sitka, they respond to the stirring appeal by swearing on the altar of the god Terminus that it shall never go back, even though the elements in mutiny may wage eternal war around it and against it.

"Nay, even the grave Chairman, to whom the nation looks for wise and wary counsel, transported by the glowing vision, is rapt in ecstasy himself, and while challenging the wild fancy that peopled Unalaska's shore with wolves, finds a new El Dorado among the icebergs and volcanoes of this new Eden, before which the riches of ancient Ophir and the marvels of Cathay must fade. The poet, who has license

as the statesman has not, was true at least to the law of verisimilitude when he assigned to that savage beast a home in this new purchase for which he could imagine no other inhabitant. If he forgot that there are regions of the earth where even a wolf could not subsist and would disdain to live, he has atoned at least for the error of the naturalist in the glorious rhythm that blends so well the dismal howl of that animal with the sullen dash of the breakers upon that desolate shore. But what is there in the way of license here to compare with the inventive genius that has sown the gift of Ceres among the driving mist and the eternal snows, and with a marvellous alchemy, transmuted the sterile rock and the inaccessible glacier into the richest of metals and the most priceless of gems? . . . .

“ Rich as he is in elocution, the powers of language almost fail him in his endeavor to depict the varied and endless resources of the new acquisition. Without even the trouble of an exploration, he gives his hand and his faith implicitly to the voracious penny-a-liner, who guides him to the mount of vision and there unfolds to his wondering eyes the mysteries of this untrodden and enchanted land. He sees, not with the visual orb, but as Sancho saw his Mistress, by hearsay, in this chaos of rock and mountain and wintry flood, a boundless area of cultivable land that only awaits the surveyor and the plow to be thronged with settlers and to dimple into harvests; timber for construction and export, huge as the pines hewn on Norwegian hills, to make the mast of some great admiral, and as indestructible as the bodies of the unburied Eskimos found by the first explorers on its northernmost point, which laughed the worm to scorn and defied alike the tooth of time and of the polar bear; treasures of mineral wealth deep hid from mortal eyes, in beds of coal, and ores of iron, lead, copper, silver, and even gold, with probably platinum, and possibly diamonds; forests alive with fur-bearing animals just waiting to ornament the shoulders of some Atlantic belle; and fishes swarming upon the coast, until they are crowded out of their native element and compelled to pasture upon the strand.”

Mr. Williams, in his eloquence, came nearer to the truth than he dreamed.

On the other hand, Charles Sumner and William H. Seward, whose greatest claim to immortality lies in their advocacy of purchasing Alaska, clearly foresaw the possibilities that would open up in the exploration of the vast unknown regions, which, since their day, have a million times justified their perspicacity. Charles Sumner, who was not wholly in sympathy, nevertheless made a great speech, which, by its matter of fact tone and by its overwhelming array of facts, did much to turn the tide in favor of this speculation. Speaking of the discovery of gold in the mountains of the Stikine River, not far in the interior from Sitka, he said:—"Gold has been found, but not in sufficient quantities reasonably accessible. Nature for the present sets up obstacles; but failure in one place will be no discouragement in another, especially as there is reason to believe that the mountains here contain a continuation of those auriferous deposits which have become so famous farther south."

The peroration of his plea is well worth reading. After piling up his unanswerable arguments, based on a characteristically thorough examination of all the literature of research and discovery, he uttered these ringing words:—"As these extensive possessions, constituting a corner of the Continent, pass from the imperial Government of Russia they will naturally receive a new name. They will be no longer Russian America. How shall they be called? Clearly, any name borrowed from classical history or from individual invention, will be little better than a misnomer or a nickname unworthy of such an occasion. Even if taken from our own history, it will be of doubtful taste. The name should come from the country itself. It should be indigenous, aboriginal, one of the autochthons of the soil. Happily, such a name exists, which is as proper in sound as in origin. It appears from the report of Cook, the illustrious navigator, to whom I have so often referred, that the euphonious name now applied to the peninsula which is the continental link of the Aleutian chain, was

the rule word used originally by the native islanders when speaking of the American continent in general, which they knew perfectly well to be a great land. It only remains that, following these natives, whose places are now ours, we, too, should call this great land, Alaska. . . . Your best work and most important endowment will be the Republican Government, which, looking to a long future, you will organize with schools free to all, and with equal laws before which every citizen will stand erect in the consciousness of manhood. Here will be a motive power without which coal itself will be insufficient. Here will be a source of wealth more inexhaustible than any fisheries. Bestow such a government and you will bestow what is better than all you can receive, whether quintals of fish, sands of gold, choicest fur, or most beautiful wing."

Still more prophetic and eloquent were the orations of Gen. N. P. Banks in the House of Representatives, when he urged Congress to appropriate money to pay Russia for the ceded territory.

Yet as late as November, 1877, in an article entitled "Ten Years' Acquaintance with Alaska," Henry W. Elliott, an attaché of the Smithsonian Institution, published in "Harper's Weekly" a pessimistic article regarding the resources of that country. Speaking of the Purchase arguments, he wrote:—"The great speech of Sumner in favor of the treaty, and which, in the universal ignorance of the subject prevailing in the American mind at the time it was delivered, was hailed as a masterly and truthful presentation of the case, is, in fact, as rich a burlesque upon the country as was Proctor Knott's 'Duluth.' Sumner, however, meant well, but he was easily deceived by the cunning advocates of the purchase."

The truth is that although Sumner made no mention of the marvellous concentration of the fur-bearing seals in the Bering Sea, his perspicacity was, in many of his predictions, more than justified. In a dozen different industries which have sprung up with the past decade, the returns have many times exceeded the petty price demanded by Russia for this noble Empire of the North.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DISCOVERY OF ALASKA.

**T**WO causes led to the discovery of the region now called Alaska; the first was the search for the North-west passage, the second was the quest of fur-bearing animals. As early as 1648, the Russian Cossack navigator, Semyon Deshnef, hearing that a tribe far to the eastward on the Polar Ocean had plenty of ivory, sailed along the northern coast of Siberia, rounded Asia, and reached the Chukchi peninsula by the body of water now called Bering Strait. He was the first to discover the walrus in these waters. The first authentic mention of the American Continent was made by Peter I. Popof, who, in 1711, learned from the wild Chukchi Indians that beyond the islands off Siberia lay a great land with broad rivers and inhabited by people who had tusks growing out of their cheeks, and tails like dogs. This evidently referred to the labrets worn in the face, and the wolf or dog tails attached to their parkas behind.

The Russian Tsar, Peter the Great, interested in everything that concerned science and discovery, shortly before his death in 1725, wrote out instructions for his Chief Admiral, Count Feodor Apraksin, to cause to be built at Kamchatka, or some other convenient place, one or more decked vessels, to explore the northerly coasts and endeavor to discover whether they were contiguous with America, submitting exact notes of whatever discoveries they should make. Vitus Bering, a Dane, who had shown capacity in the wars with Sweden, was appointed to take charge of the expedition. After extreme hardships in crossing Siberia by land, he and his followers reached Kamchatka, and in boats there launched they sailed along the eastern coast of the peninsula, and in 1728 discovered and named St. Lawrence Island. They



passed through Bering Strait and proved that America and Asia were separate countries.

The discovery of Alaska by an adventurer named Gvosdef, in 1731, stimulated to further explorations, and in 1733, Bering, under the patronage of the Empress Anna Ivanovna, the niece of Peter the Great, was once more commissioned to take charge of an expedition from Kamchatka. There were long and annoying delays, but at last, in September, 1740, Bering, in the ship "St. Peter," accompanied by the "St. Paul" under command of Lieutenant Chirikof, who had been with him in the first voyage, set sail. They were soon beset by winter, and established themselves at Avatcha, where they built a few houses and a church, naming the settlement after the two ships, Petropavlovsk. Early in the following June, they once more weighed anchor, but on the twentieth a gale separated the two ships. Chirikof's went to the eastward, and on the fifteenth of July sighted land. He sent ten men ashore, under command of Abraham Mikhailovich Dementief, a young nobleman, who, having been disappointed in love, had volunteered for this dangerous service. After they had been absent for five days, another boat was despatched with six men to look for the first party. Those left on the ship soon observed a black smoke rising above the point of land behind which the boats had disembarked.

The next morning, the anxious company on board were gladdened by the sight of what they thought were the two boats approaching. Their joy was turned to horror when it was seen that the two boats were filled with savages. These turned about at the sight of the ship, and shouting "Agai! Agai!" made for the shore. A gale blew up, and Chirikof was obliged to put out into the open sea. When the storm had subsided, he returned to his former anchorage, but had no means of reaching land. The fate of the missing men was never determined but it can be easily surmised. Chirikof, crippled as he was, was compelled to return to Kamchatka. His men suffered terrible hardships; their provisions and water were exhausted, all on board were ill with scurvy, and they lost altogether twenty-one men.

Bering, on the sixteenth of July, caught sight of the magnificent snow-clad mountain range, of which St. Elias, rising to a height of 18,000 feet above the sea, is the crown. George Wilhelm Steller, a German naturalist, who accompanied the expedition and left an excellent account of what he saw, claimed to have discovered land on the day preceding, but his claim was ridiculed by his companions. A landing was made on what is now known as Kayak Island. After delaying several days, and finding a number of unoccupied huts built of logs and bark and thatched with coarse grasses, together with dried salmon, copper implements, and other indications of former occupancy, Bering, without attempting to proceed farther, turned about. On his voyage back, he discovered and named a number of the Aleutian Islands, where they found friendly natives, with whom they exchanged gifts. The name Aleutian is supposed to have been suggested by Cape Alintorsky in Siberia, which, according to native tradition, was continued into a chain of islands stretching away toward the east. The ships were buffeted by terrific tempests, and so many of the crew perished of illness and deprivations that the survivors had difficulty in navigating their ships back to the Asiatic coast. There they had the misfortune to be wrecked on a small island, which now bears the name of their famous commander. Here, on the eighth of December, in a hut so exposed to the elements that it hardly deserved to be called a shelter, Bering died of scurvy, after suffering unutterable agonies. His companions, after spending the winter in holes dug in the sand dunes and roofed with canvas, their only food sea-otters and seals, constructed a boat from the wreck of the " St. Peter," and managed to reach the mainland.

The result of the discoveries of Bering and Chirikof was that many expeditions were fitted out for fishing and hunting along the American coast. These traders were called " promui'shleniki," the word signifying traders or adventurers. They pushed farther and farther eastward. Such were Emelian Basof, who made four consecutive voyages; one of Bering's companions named Nevodchikof; and Aleksei Belaief,

who, in 1745, inveigled fifteen of the gentle Aleuts into a quarrel for the express purpose of killing them, maltreating their wives, and robbing them of their furs. Similar outrages were perpetrated by many others of these irresponsible and brutal adventurers. In 1759, a promui'shleniki named Glottof discovered the large island of Umnak, and subsequently skirted the extensive group of islands including Unalaska. On account of the foxes abounding there, he called this archipelago, the Fox Islands. Glottof is reputed to have been the first to baptize the natives; he also furnished his government with the first Russian map of that region. Glottof reached the island of Kadiak in the autumn of 1762, and took up his quarters there for the winter. The natives, who had at first been very gentle and patient under the outrageous demands of the traders, had begun to rebel. They attacked Glottof's settlement, but were repulsed by the Russians; after that they kept aloof and refused to trade. Later in the winter, discovering that the invaders were weakened by disease, they renewed their attacks and almost exterminated them. Glottof escaped only with the greatest difficulty. The same year, a merchant, Druzhinin, arrived at Unalaska, with one hundred and fifty men, and was attacked by the natives, who, at a signal, arose and killed all of his followers but four, who happened to be absent, and were protected by a kindly Aleut.

The treatment of the natives by the adventurers hardly corresponded to the wishes of the Empress Catharine II., who, in expressing her satisfaction at the reported subjection of the six new Aleutian Islands by the Cossack Vasiutin and his followers, said in her ukase to the Governor of Siberia:—“ You must urge the promui'shleniki to treat the natives with kindness, and to avoid all oppression or ill treatment of their new brethren.” She also urged the governor to glean all possible information regarding the country. In response to this wish, the Admiralty College selected two captains, Krenitsin and Levashef, who sailed from Kamchatka in 1768, and attempted to make explorations and gather scientific details about the land and the people. But they had difficulty with the savages, and, after losing a third of their



LOOKING ACROSS THE HARBOR FROM SKAGWAY WHARVES.

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2000

forces through scurvy and the arrows of their enemies, they returned to Siberia. The profits of the trading and hunting expeditions were very great, and there are records of more than sixty such enterprises. The profits were generally divided equally between the owners of the vessels and the crews; each sailor had one share, and the navigator and commanders had two each. A tenth of the whole was exacted as a tax by the government.

The natives who fell into the hands of their oppressors were compelled to do the hunting and to turn over their booty, receiving as a reward a few cheap trinkets, or a bit of tobacco. They thus became practically slaves. The horrors of their condition form the dark background of Alaskan history. The story of the revenge wreaked by the cruel Solovióf for the slaughter of such Russians as were killed by the natives, when they at last were goaded into rebellion, is only one chapter of this tale of violence.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE RISE OF THE RUSSIAN - AMERICAN COMPANY.

**A** CHANGE for the better occurred when the Siberian merchant, Grigor Ivánovitch Shelikhof, recognizing that the unwise treatment of the natives was causing a diminution of the fur-products, formed a partnership with two other merchants, named Golikof, to "sail for the Alaskan land called America and for known and unknown islands, to carry on the fur trade and explorations, and to establish friendly intercourse with the natives."

Three galiots, bearing the extremely pious names of "Three Saints," "Archangel Michael," and "Simeon the Friend of God, and Anna the Prophetess," were fitted out at Okhotsk and set sail in August, 1783. Shelikhof and his wife, Natali, took part in the expedition. As usual, storms separated the vessels, but, after a year's separation, they brought up together in a harbor of the island of Kadiak. A native was found and treated so kindly by Shelikhof that he attached himself to the ship, and several times did great service in warning the Russians of hostile attacks. A large body of natives threatened to exterminate the Russians unless they immediately evacuated the island. Shelikhof tried to treat with them but his words had no effect, and a few nights later the natives made a desperate attack on the Russians, who were prepared for them, however, and, after a pitched battle, caused them to retreat. Shelikhof made up his mind that he must exterminate them before they secured reinforcements, and, with a picked band, supported by two-pounder cannon, stormed their stronghold, which the natives supposed was impregnable. It was a desperate battle, but Shelikhof's superior skill won the victory. Many were either killed or drowned by leaping over the precipice into the sea. Those that

surrendered were converted into hunters for the Company, and their future good behavior secured by keeping twenty children of the most prominent as hostages.

All fear of further attack being thus removed, Shelikhof proceeded to organize his trading and exploring enterprises. In some of these he met with a fair measure of success; in others, he found the natives hostile or suspicious. One small party established friendly relations with the native chief of Shuiak, the northernmost island of the Kadiak Archipelago. This chief proved treacherous; he retained the trading-goods furnished him by Shelikhof, and also made an alliance with the Kenaitze Indians of Cook's Inlet. Shelikhof was obliged to administer a severe castigation to these natives, but he carried out his plans. Another of his subordinate expeditions went to the Gulf of Chugach (now known as Prince William Sound) and the Copper River region, but the natives there were found to be averse to trading with the Russians. Not much more was done than to erect crosses and other insignia to warn explorers of other nations that the country had been taken under the Russian possession. In many places these notifications were established where Spanish and English explorers had already erected similar warnings.

While Shelikhof was carrying on his active explorations, and also, with the aid of his wife, was making great strides in converting the natives to Christianity, his partner Golikof had been making a visit to his native town of Kursk. The Empress happened to pass through the town, and Golikof secured an audience with her. He showed the charts and plans that Shelikhof had made. She was greatly interested in all that she heard, and expressed a desire to see Shelikhof personally whenever he should be in Petersburg.

Shelikhof, having established his little colony and provided for further explorations, proceeded to Okhotsk, where he laid before the Governor Yakoby a detailed report of his discoveries, claiming that he had added fifty thousand new subjects to the Empire, and asking for instructions as to his future course. Yakoby was greatly impressed



by these claims, and sent despatches to the Empress. In consequence of what she had heard, two expeditions were ordered to be fitted out for further explorations in these far distant regions. One was prevented by the war between Russia and Sweden; the second was put under the command of an Englishman by the name of Billings, who was instructed to pay especial attention to the American coast. This expedition did not sail until 1790.

Yakoby, in his letters, declared that he deemed it sufficient to secure Russia in her new possessions, to place in position thirty large copper-plates with the Russian coat of arms, and a quantity of wooden crosses, that should bear inscriptions claiming the land. He had suggestions to make regarding the tribute to be paid by the natives, and he craftily urged that as long as irresponsible traders wandered at will over the country, and were allowed to treat the natives as they pleased, there would be great irregularities; whereas, Shelikhof had carried on his enterprises with humane and patriotic principles, and had always proclaimed that all he did was "in the name and for the glory of her Majesty, the Empress." He, therefore, urged the Empress to grant the Company represented by Shelikhof and his partners a monopoly, so that "the interests of the Crown and of the new subjects would always be duly considered, while the lawless hordes of Siberian promi'shleniki and convicts would be driven from the country." He was not particular to state that he was among those who were furnishing the additional capital needed by Shelikhof.

The Department of Commerce, at the command of the Empress, took into consideration the recommendations of the Governor of Siberia and the petition of Shelikhof and his partner, and after declaring that "the prosecution of Shelikhof's enterprise was of the highest importance to Russia on account of the interruption of the trade with China, whereby great loss was caused to all Siberia and a pernicious influence exerted on Russian commerce," suggested that the firm in question should be granted the sum of two hundred thousand rubles for twenty years, without interest, and exempt from taxation. Two hundred

thousand rubles was not a very great sum, and it was probably granted. The Empress was pleased to confer upon the two merchants a sword, and a gold medal to be worn around the neck, with her portrait on one side, and a legend on the other stating that it was conferred upon them in consideration of their services in the discovery and settlement of unknown countries and the establishment of commercial intercourse with native tribes.

Shelikhof, on his return to Irkutsk, immediately organized further exploring expeditions. One went to the Kuril Islands, and another to the Aleutian Islands, with instructions to effect a settlement as far south on the mainland as possible. In 1788, he sent his ship "Three Saints," under two experienced navigators, to the Gulf of Chugach, where they bought a quantity of sea-otter skins in exchange for a few needles and beads — the profit, of course, being enormous. They also increased their influence by decorating the neighboring chiefs with copper and bronze medals, but it is said that their attempt to set up the copper tablets, asserting their claim to the land, proved abortive, as the natives immediately pilfered the metal.

At Bering Bay, now called Yakutat, the head chief was presented with a portrait of the Grand Duke Paul Petrovtich, but the natives stated, a year later, that as soon as the "Three Saints" set sail, they burnt the grand duke's picture with great rejoicings.

In 1786, a determined fur hunter, named Gerasim Pribilof, made the important discovery of the summer resort of the otary or fur-seal, located on a group of small islands about two hundred miles from the Alaskan mainland and equidistant from Unalaska and Saint Matthew Island. Millions of these strange and interesting animals would "haul out" on their rookeries on the two principal islands, Saint George and Saint Paul. The story told by Pribilof and his companions soon came to the ears of Shelikhof and made him still more desirous of securing a monopoly. There was only one important rival whom he had to fear, the other smaller companies having failed through the protection accorded to Shelikhof by the Government. The Lebedef-Lastochkin Com-

pany had stations on both the islands and the mainland, and they employed able navigators. Indeed, Pribilof was in their employ when he made his great discovery. Shelikhof, however, had bought up a good many shares in the rival company, and Lebedef was also a silent partner with Shelikhof. In spite of this mutual copartnership, actual hostilities were constantly breaking out between the men employed by these friendly rivals. It took the proportions of a civil war, and had a terrible effect on the natives, who often exterminated the weaker faction.

Shelikhof was shrewd enough to realize that the only hope for his Company was to put its Alaskan affairs under the control of a masterful spirit, and such he was fortunate enough to find in Aleksandr Andréyevitch Baránof, a merchant of Kargopol, who had attracted attention by his immense energy and success in managing his own affairs. He was a man of small stature but iron will, with extraordinary powers of endurance and capacity in the control of his subordinates. Baránof, at first, preferring his independence, refused Shelikhof's offers, but after meeting with experiences similar to those ascribed to the Merchant of Venice, in having his caravans destroyed and his argosies plundered, though in his case by savage Chukchi, he came to terms with Shelikhof on the 18th of August, 1790, and set sail for Kadiak. He was furnished with detailed instructions regarding his dealing with the traders of other nations.

The Russian Government had ordered the Shelikhof Company to prevent the seizure by foreign powers of any of the territory occupied by the Russian traders, or the lands and islands that might be acquired by them in the Pacific Ocean. Captain James Cook had made his celebrated voyage along the North American coast as far north as Icy Cape in Bering Strait, and had, in 1778, taken possession of various points on the inlet which now bears his name. He had spent some days on Unalaska. Other English explorers had followed in his wake and carried on their trading expeditions even to Kadiak. English traders had settled at Nutka on Vancouver Island, and were alert to

take advantage of their position. The French explorer, Comte de la Pérouse, had, in 1785, made his celebrated voyage to the northwest coast, renaming Lituya Bay, — Port des Français, — and giving his name to the strait which he sailed through at such peril. The Spaniards also had made many geographical discoveries and given names to various points and islands. Baránof was ordered to remove and destroy every vestige of these foreign claims, and to drive the English away from Nutka, if possible.

His first task was the settlement of the difficulties with the two Russian traders, Kolomin, a cruel Siberian, who was treating the natives atrociously, and Captain Konoválof, in the employ of the Lebedef-Lastochkin Company, who were at war with each other on Cook's Inlet. He seized them both, flogged them with the knout, put them in irons, and sent them to Siberia for trial; their followers he scattered about at the various posts, where they could not communicate with one another.

He soon discovered that the site selected by Shelikhof on Kadiak Island was ill adapted for the larger operations which he had in view, and he moved his headquarters to the harbor of St. Paul, where there was ample anchorage for vessels, and plenty of timber for building purposes. This having been accomplished, Baránof despatched Captain Bokhárof, a trustworthy and skilful navigator, to make further explorations. Bokhárof followed the coast of the mainland to the north, and discovered the portage route, which gives the quickest and safest means of communication between the Strait of Shelikhof and Bering Sea. He returned to St. Paul Harbor, his skin-covered boat heavy-laden with furs, walrus-ivory, and deerskins. He had won the good-will of many native tribes and their chiefs, who expressed their willingness to trade with the Russians.

In the spring of 1793, Baránof set out with thirty men in two large skin boats, and after rounding Kenai Peninsula, entered the waters of Prince William Sound, where he also formed friendly compacts with the natives. At Nuchek Harbor he was surprised by a large force of

Thlinkit Indians, or, as the Russians called them, Koloshi, who almost accomplished their purpose of massacring the whole command. Baránof's skill as a commander and the Russians' superiority in arms prevailed. The enemy retired taking their wounded and leaving twelve dead on the field. Two of the Russians and nine Aleuts were killed and almost a score were wounded. Baránof described the encounter with the simplicity of the hero: — " God preserved me, though my shirt was pierced by several spears, and the arrows fell thick, without doing much damage. I was awakened from a sound sleep and had no time to dress, but as soon as I had emerged from my tent I knew that we should be able to beat them."

Baránof built the first vessel to be launched in the waters of the northwest. Shelikhof, in the autumn of 1791, sent to Kadiak the ship " Northern Eagle " laden with iron, cordage, canvas, and other ship-building material. He put it under the charge of an English shipwright, named Shields, whose services he engaged. Baránof selected Voskresensky, or Resurrection Bay, on the coast of Prince William Sound, for his shipyard, and there in the summer of 1794 was launched the two-decked three-master, the " Feniks " or " Phœnix," of one hundred and eighty tons capacity. She was seventy-three feet long and twenty-three feet beam. Yellow spruce of fine quality abounded on Kadiak, but as paint and tar were lacking, the " Phœnix " was smeared with a coating of spruce gum, ochre, and whale oil. Two other small vessels were also built and launched — the " Dolphin " and the " Olga." The " Phœnix," on its way to Kadiak, came to grief in a storm, and had to be towed into the harbor; but she was repaired and refitted, and made a memorable voyage to the Siberian coast, where she was received with a religious celebration worthy of the pious Shelikhof.

The same year, the famous English explorer, Captain George Vancouver, appeared in those far northern waters. Baránof, following instructions, kept aloof from him. The Russian Government, above all things, desired to hide its plans from inquisitive eyes. Baránof



WINTER DRESS OF ALASKANS.

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also was afraid lest his ship-builder, Shields, might be induced to rejoin his fellow-countrymen.

The year 1794 saw the arrival of the first Russian priests. Shelikhof, who was a zealous proselyter, had been for some years urging the Government to establish a mission among the natives, and finally his pleas had their effect. The Archimandrite Ivásóf, with seven popes and two laymen, arrived by way of Okhotsk, and at once began their active work. One priest went to Unalaska and converted and baptized nearly all the Aleutian tribes. Another, Father Juvenal, who went into the Ilyamna region, attacked the polygamous practices of the natives, and, arousing their enmity, was slain. A third, named Germand, established a school on Spruce Island in the Harbor of St. Paul, and for more than forty years labored faithfully, instructing the native children in the principles of religion and in useful pursuits. The Archimandrite, a few years later, was ordained at Irkutsk as Bishop of the new Russian possessions on the Pacific. On his way back from Siberia, in company with a number of ecclesiastics, his ship, the "Phoenix," foundered and all were lost.

Shelikhof also petitioned for a number of Siberian convicts to be sent to Alaska, together with their families, to establish an agricultural settlement. A company of more than two hundred were sent from Okhotsk, and settled in the vicinity of Yakutat; or, if they were practical mechanics, scattered among the various stations of the Company.

During this same year, another important event happened to the advantage of the Company. The Chinese Government informed the Governor of Siberia that the merchants of China were desirous of resuming the trade which had been so long interrupted between the Russians and themselves, and that especial concessions would be granted. The Chinese were particularly fond of the fur-seal skins, which they cured in a manner peculiar to themselves. The great increase in production of these, through the discovery of the Pribilof Islands, made it clear to Shelikhof that there was going to be a revival of that profitable trade with China. He did not live to see the results that he an-



ticipated. He died in July, 1795, having been recently ennobled by the Empress Catharine. His wife, however, remained in Siberia, and carried on his affairs with remarkable ability. She knew of his plan for consolidating the various companies trading in Siberia and the regions of Alaska, and aided by her son-in-law, Count Nikolai Riazánof, who occupied an influential position at Court, the charter was granted in 1799 by the Emperor Paul, who had at first opposed such a monopoly as it created. The Shelikhof United Company now called itself the Russian-American Company, and secured for a period of twenty years full privileges on the coast of North-western America, beginning with latitude 55 degrees North, and including the chain of islands from Kamchatka northward to America and southward to Japan, as well as the exclusive right to all enterprises, whether hunting, trading, or building, and all new discoveries that might be made. On the other hand, all persons who had formerly had ships and establishments there, and all new comers, were strictly excluded.

These privileges carried with them onerous obligations. The Company was required to maintain, at its own expense, the government of the country, the Church establishment, the support of a strong military force, and magazines of provisions and ammunition to be used by the Government ships or armies in case they should be needed. It had also to establish experiment stations for agricultural settlements. It had no taxes to pay, but was obliged to collect duties on caravan tea, and it is said that these amounted in some years to not less than two million rubles. The Company had its own flag, and exercised almost imperial powers. It was managed by an administrative council composed of shareholders in Petersburg; there was a general office at Irkutsk, and a chief manager, who had to be an officer of the Imperial navy: this official had full jurisdiction over all offenders and criminals, and in case of mutiny or revolution, his powers were absolute. Salaries, except to the chiefs, were small, and as the employees were engaged for a term of years, and were not allowed to return in case they were in debt to the Company — as they usually were — the sub-

ordinates were in a state approaching serfdom. The natives were not taxed but were obliged to furnish a certain quantity of sea-otter yearly; all the men of the various tribes between the ages of eighteen and fifty were obliged to engage in this labor.

The shares that were put on sale in Russia were bought up by wealthy nobles; even the Emperor and other members of the Imperial family found it to their interest to participate in this promising investment.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FOUNDING OF SITKA.

**B**ARÁNOF was still engaged in extending the enterprises of the Company. In the year of the charter, he embarked on the brig "Catharine," and convoyed by a fleet of Innuít bidarkas, sailed to the region of Sitka, which had already been explored by Captain Shields. Sitka, which is situated about a hundred miles south of the latitude of Petersburg, seemed to him a suitable place for a permanent settlement, because thither came many ships with which he could trade and thereby secure supplies. About six miles from the present town of Sitka, he began to build a fortified trading-post, with log-houses all surrounded by a high stockade. While his men were busy with this work, a number of American trading-ships came into port, and, under Baránof's very eyes, began to swap firearms with the natives in exchange for sea-otter skins. They paid no heed to Baránof's protests, and he was obliged to content himself with forwarding despatches to the administrative council of the Company, asking the Government to put a stop to such outrages.

As soon as the American vessels had sailed, Baránof returned to Kadiak, where he found affairs in a state of demoralization: disputes had arisen between the officers of the Company and the clergy; discipline had been thoroughly relaxed, and a party of the ringleaders were engaged in fitting out one of the Company's vessels for an independent cruise. Baránof immediately restored order from chaos, punishing the chief culprits severely. A scoundrel named Larionof tried to assassinate Baránof, who, however, was too quick for him: he seized the man's hand, took away his weapon, and strangled him to death.

During Baránof's absence from Sitka, a tragic event befell. Although the site for the stronghold had been acquired by barter from the chief of the savage Koloshi, who dwelt in that region, and although they pretended to be friendly, they harbored hostile feelings against the settlers, and were on the lookout for an opportunity to exterminate them. One June holiday, when it was known that a large part of the garrison were out hunting and fishing, a band of several thousand armed Koloshi, assisted by allied tribes of Thlinkits, made a simultaneous assault on the garrison. The commander, Vasíli Medviednikof, and the rest of the inmates were slain at once; more than three thousand sea-otter skins and other property of the Company were taken from the warehouse and carried to the canoes which had brought a large number of the savages; the other houses were also looted and then set on fire. Three Russians and five Aleuts managed to escape. One of the survivors, who happened at the time to be out watching the cattle, afterwards described the massacre. Having secured his gun, and bidden a girl employed in the yard to flee for her life, he went and hid in the thick underbrush, though not without an encounter with four Koloshi, who wrested his gun from him but did not kill him. From the edge of the woods, he could see the savages swarming over the barracks and carrying off their loot. He witnessed the rapid spread of the fire that destroyed all the buildings.

He says: — " I threw myself down among the underbrush on the edge of the forest, covering myself with pieces of bark. From there I saw Nakvassin drop from the upper balcony and run toward the forest; but when nearly across the open space he fell to the ground, and four warriors rushed up and carried him back to the barracks on the points of their lances and cut off his head. Kabánof was dragged from the barracks into the street, where the Koloshi pierced him with their lances; but how the other Russians who were there came to their end, I do not know. The slaughter and burning was continued by the savages until evening, but finally I stole out among the ruins and ashes, and in my wanderings came across some of our cows, and saw that

was not subject to orders from the local commander at Okhotsk. Talin was dismissed from the service, but during the two years that it took to carry the information to Alaska, Talin was able to do much mischief and cause great annoyance.

Before the consolidation of the trading companies, permission had been refused regular naval officers, on leave of absence, to command Shelikhof's ships; consequently, the Company had been obliged to depend on any chance navigator or "morekhódets" that offered his services. Many of them were utterly incompetent. Ivan Petrof, commenting on this state of things, says:— "This title was applied to anybody who had made a sea voyage, no matter in what capacity; but they were generally hunters or trappers from Siberia, who had some slight experience in flat-boat navigation on the rivers. They were entirely ignorant of nautical science and unacquainted with the use of instruments, relying altogether upon landmarks to make their way from Asia to America.

"The most extraordinary instances of stupidity in managing their vessels are related of some of these so-called navigators. Once out of sight of land they were lost, and compelled to trust to chance in hitting upon the right direction to make the land again. It was the practice to coast along the Kamchatka shore until nearly opposite the Commander Islands, and to wait for some clear day when the latter could be sighted; then the crossing was made; and, satisfied with such a brilliant result, the skipper would beach his craft for the remainder of the season, and pass the winter in killing fur-seals and sea-cows, and salting down the meat for his further voyage.

"Late in the following spring, rarely before the month of June, the vessel was launched again and headed, at a venture, to the nearest islands of the Aleutian chain. If the captain succeeded in finding the land, he would proceed along the chain of islands, keeping a short distance to the northward, careful never to lose sight of the mountain peaks. As the trapper captain, with his crew of landsmen, knew nothing of keeping his craft up to the wind, no progress was made unless

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COMMERCE



BLOCK HOUSE, SITKA.

the wind was absolutely favorable, and thus another season would pass before Atka or Unalaska Island was reached, where the craft was hauled up again for the winter. A term of seven years was frequently consumed in making the round trip to the American coast and back again to Kamchatka or Okhotsk, a voyage that at the present time a schooner can accomplish in about three weeks. At least seventy-five per cent. of all the vessels that sailed upon these voyages, from the discovery of the American coast to the beginning of this century, suffered wreck, and every one of these disasters could be traced to the ignorance both of captains and sailors."

Beginning with 1801, capable officers were permitted to enlist in the service of the Company, and a vast improvement was initiated. The first of these officers were Lieutenants Khvostof and Davidof. They navigated an old, leaky vessel, with a crew of landlubbers, from Okhotsk to Kadiak in two months. The following year, the Company obtained permission to forward supply ships direct from Petersburg to the colonies. Two ships, of not far from five hundred tons capacity, were purchased in London, and, under the names of the "Nieva" and "Nadyezhda" (Hope), commanded respectively by Captain Lisiansky and Captain Count von Krusenstern, set sail for Alaskan waters. The "Nieva" arrived at Kadiak early in July, 1804, after a voyage lasting nearly a year. Learning that Baránof was on his way to Sitka, with the design of punishing the natives for their treachery, he resolved to join him there and assist in the revenge.

Baránof, however, had been delayed at Yakutat, where he had to finish the equipment of two small vessels. When he reached Sitka, with his little force of forty Russians and a few hundred Aleuts, with which to engage in battle with as many thousands of the warlike Koloshi, his feelings may be easily imagined when he discovered Lisiansky's ship riding at anchor in the beautiful roadstead.

The natives doughtily refused his demand for the restitution of the furs looted from his warehouse, and for hostages for future good conduct. The first attack of the Russians was made against a fort built



on the wooded height which overlooks Sitka. Lisiansky describes it as "an irregular polygon, its longest side facing the sea. It was protected by a breastwork two logs in thickness and about six feet high. Around and above it, tangled brushwood was piled. Grape-shot did little damage, even at the distance of a cable's length. There were two embrasures for cannon in the side facing the sea, and two gates facing the forest. Within were fourteen large huts, or, as they were called then and are called at the present time by the natives, 'bará-baras.' Judging from the quantity of provisions and domestic implements found there, it must have contained at least eight hundred warriors."

The first attack made by the Russians was repulsed. Baránof himself was wounded, and eleven of his men were killed; but as the ships covered his retreat, he managed to save his cannon. The following day, Lisiansky took command; the ships approached the shore and bombarded the hostile fort. An envoy asking peace arrived. The evacuation of the fort was demanded. It being delayed, bombardment was renewed. In the night, after bewailing their fate, and killing their children and dogs, the natives deserted their stronghold, leaving the bodies of their dead.

The Koloshi having beaten a retreat to Chatham Strait, Baránof was free to establish himself at Sitka, where, with Lisiansky's assistance, he built the great castle that was, for so many years to come, to be the seat of colossal revels, unbridled luxury, and boundless hospitality. When it was destroyed by fire, another still finer took its place; that again was wrecked by an earthquake, and also destroyed by fire. Around the castle a village grouped itself. The officials were housed in huge barracks, solidly built; some of them covering more than ten thousand square feet, and several stories in height. The rooms were papered, the floors were polished and covered with imported rugs, and heavy furniture brought from Petersburg gave an air of luxury to these quarters. Baránof himself was never more pleased than when congenial visitors arrived on some friendly ship.

He had a system of signal lights flashing from the cupola of his castle, and beacon-fires were kindled along the shore, to pilot the way by night. A great banquet would test the capacities of the guests, especially in standing up against vast bumpers of fiery vodka and costly wines. The plate and glassware were of the richest description. Baránof had a fine library, and his walls were hung with valuable paintings.

For a time he was obliged to submit to many humiliations at the hands of supercilious naval officers, who looked down upon him as being of inferior rank. But, in recognition of his wonderful success in conducting the affairs of the Company, the Emperor, at Riazánof's suggestion, conferred upon him the title of Commercial Councillor, and the Order of St. Anne of the third class. When this honor came, he is said to have burst into tears and exclaimed:—“ I am a nobleman! I am the equal in position and the superior in ability of those insolent naval officers.” Nevertheless, as long as he lived, he was having continual difficulties with the Government officers, who would dispute his authority and try to undermine his power.

Shelikhof's son-in-law, Riazánof, had been a passenger on the “ Nad-yezhdá,” but had proceeded directly to Japan, where he was accredited as Ambassador to the Emperor. His mission there proved a failure, and he next devoted himself to regulating the affairs of the Company in which he had so commanding an interest. He was the first to put an end to the indiscriminate slaughter of the seals on the Pribilof Islands. It is said that two millions were taken the first year, and the price of seal skins fell to panic rates. In order to make arrangements for the regular purchase of provisions, he bought a Boston ship and proceeded to San Francisco Bay, which was then in the hands of the Spanish. It was contrary to their instructions to hold intercourse with foreign ships, but he overcame the scruples of the Commandant, whose daughter he would have married, had he not died before he obtained permission from the Russian Emperor.

Riazánof, by this visit, inaugurated trade-relations between Spain and the Russian colonies. He foresaw the possibilities of the Pacific

coast, and proposed the planting of Russian colonists on New Albion, as the region north of the San Francisco presidio was called. Realizing how unfitted the Russians themselves were for agricultural pursuits, he suggested that "the patient and industrious Chinese" should be brought over to man the plantations. This was in 1806.

Five years later, Baránof carried out Riazánof's directions and sent his chief subordinate, Kuskof, to establish himself on the California coast. He bought a tract of land of the Indians at Bodega, not far north of San Francisco Bay. This whole coast as far as Kadiak was now furnishing its tribute of furs to the Russian-American Company. Baránof engaged "Yankee" captains to hunt the sea-otter and other fur-bearing animals on shares. It is said that during one single year the Company's share in the profits made by these partnership expeditions amounted to several hundred thousand rubles. Occasionally, the Yankee skippers played sharp tricks on the Company. Petrof tells of a Captain Bennett who exchanged his cargo of provisions for seal skins on the basis of a dollar apiece in trade, and then resold the skins to the Company's agent at Petropavlovsk for double that sum.

When the Directors of the Company heard of this and similar transactions, Baránof was ordered to change his policy. About the same time, Lázaref was despatched from Petersburg on the ship "Suvorof." He reached Sitka after a voyage which lasted thirteen months. Here a bitter controversy arose between Baránof and Lázaref, each claiming supreme rank. Finally Lázaref refused to carry out Baránof's instructions and set sail, followed by the old commander's anathemas and ineffectual cannon shots from the fortress. Lázaref had loaded the "Suvorof" with furs and other commodities taken in trade along the Pacific coast, and he brought back to Petersburg a cargo valued at more than a million rubles. Of course, he showed his animosity against Baránof by retailing all the evil stories that he had heard about his behavior and his untrustworthiness. Accordingly, it was decided to appoint a successor to the commander.

There had been other attempts to get rid of him. Two prospective

successors had died before reaching Sitka. In 1809, two promúshleniki had entered into a conspiracy to kill him. The attempt failed, but the anxiety which it caused Baránof, in addition to his increasing disabilities, had unquestionably unstrung his mind, so long keen and alert.

Washington Irving in his "Astoria" called "Count Baranhoff" "a rough, rugged, hospitable, hard-working old Russian. Somewhat of a soldier, somewhat of a trader; above all a boon companion of the old roystering school, with a strong cross of the brave."

He goes on to say:—"Mr. Hunt found this hyperborean veteran ensconced in a fort which crested the whole of a high rocky promontory. It mounted one hundred guns, large and small, and was impregnable to Indian attack, unaided by artillery. Here the old governor lorded it over sixty Russians, who formed the corps of the trading establishment, besides an indefinite number of Indian hunters of the Kodiak tribe, who were continually coming and going, or lounging and loitering about the fort like so many hounds round a sportsman's hunting quarters. Though a loose liver among his guests, the governor was a strict disciplinarian among his men, keeping them in perfect subjection, and having seven on guard, night and day. Besides these immediate serfs and dependents just mentioned, the old Russian potentate exerted a considerable sway over a numerous and irregular class of maritime traders, who looked to him for aid and munitions, and through whom he may be said to have, in some degree, extended his power along the whole northwest coast. . . .

"Over these coasting captains, as we have hinted, the veteran governor exerted some sort of sway; but it was of a peculiar and characteristic kind: it was the tyranny of the table. They were obliged to join him in his 'prosnics' or carousals, and to drink 'potations pottle deep.' His carousals, too, were not of the most quiet kind, nor were his potations as mild as nectar. 'He is continually,' said Mr. Hunt, 'giving entertainments by way of parade, and if you do not drink raw rum and boiling punch as strong as sulphur, he will insult

you as soon as he gets drunk, which is very shortly after setting down to table.' ”

Father Juvenal, the weak young priest who was murdered by the Indians of Ilyamna, gives in his diary far from flattering pictures of Baránof, whether in Church giving the responses, — singing in his hoarse voice, — or shouting obscene songs in the midst of a drunken carousal, with a woman seated on his lap.

In 1817, Captain Hagenmeister was sent out in the ship “ Suvorof ” to supplant him. At first he did not disclose the real object of his visit; but on January 11th, 1818, he abruptly produced his commission and claimed the command. When he returned to Russia, he left Lieutenant Yanovsky as his representative. The fact that Yanovsky had married Baránof’s favorite daughter, the child of a native woman, did not seem to lessen the severity of the blow. He rose from a bed of illness, arranged his papers, and turned over to the new manager property far exceeding in value what the Company had expected. He had enjoyed unlimited opportunities to enrich himself, but whatever faults he had, dishonesty was not one of them.

During the first hours of his downfall, Baránof walked alone to his favorite retreat — a gray flat stone standing not far from the castle, with a wonderfully beautiful view of the island-studded bay — and there where he was secure from interruption, not even his favorite daughter daring to approach him while he was indulging in this silent self-communion, he prepared himself for the inevitable.

Retaining little for himself, he determined to go back to Russia, where he had left a wife and children many years before. After bidding a tearful farewell to his old friends and associates, he sailed from Sitka on the ship “ Kutuzof,” late in November. At Batavia he was taken ill with malarial fever, and the day after the ship again sailed for Petersburg, on the sixteenth of April, 1819, he died and was buried in the Indian Ocean.

## CHAPTER V.

### DECLINE OF THE RUSSIAN - AMERICAN COMPANY.

**U**NDER the direction of Lieutenant Yanovsky, further explorations of Alaska were conducted. One party surveyed the coast from Bristol Bay westward to the mouth of the Kuskokwim River and Nunivak Island; another reached the valley of the Kuskokwim by an overland route; and still another went as far south as Norton, but missed discovering the mouth of the Yukon, — or, as the Russians called it, the “ Kvikpak,” — though they crossed its mouth.

In 1820 the charter of the Russian-American Company expired, but was renewed with additional privileges. The profits for some years had been more than half a million rubles: this, in spite of maintaining a large and increasing fleet and a whole army of dependents, building Churches, and establishing schools.

Hagenmeister's term as manager was short; he did not carry out his proposed plan of removing the headquarters from Sitka to Kadiak, although it would have been, in some respects, a safer and more desirable place of residence. He was succeeded in 1821 by Mikhail Ivanovitch Muravióf, under whose administration Russian America was made independent of Siberian jurisdiction, and the boundary was settled by treaties with England and the United States. During his administration also, great activity was displayed in converting the natives. The most zealous missionary was Ivan Veniamínof, who went to Unalaska in 1824 and carried the teachings of his Church over an enormous region, and so successfully that within three years after his arrival, it was estimated that there were between ten and eleven thousand communicants, four-fifths of whom were natives. Next to Bará-

nof, Veniamínof is the most interesting of the early Russian notables in Alaskan history. He was the first Bishop of Alaska, and gave the cathedral at Sitka many precious treasures. His memory is everywhere revered. Muravióf was a stern and relentless disciplinarian, and so intimidated the natives, that his very name was a terror among them for many years. He has been called "Muravióf the Butcher."

During the administration of the Livonian Baron, Ferdinand Petrovitch von Wrangel, which lasted from 1831 to 1836, the quarrel between the Russian-American Company and the Hudson Bay Company came to a crisis. The English company would have been glad to unite forces with the Russian competitor, but Wrangel had orders to crush the English and prevent their making any trading-stations on the Pacific Coast. He succeeded in preventing Captain Ogden from ascending the Stakhin River, and when the Hudson Bay Company brought suit against the Russian-American Company for twenty-one thousand five hundred pounds damages, a settlement most advantageous to the Russian Company was effected at a conference at Hamburg.

Wrangel's successor, Captain Kupriánof, made extensive explorations to the north, reaching, by means of bidars or skin boats sent out from the brig "Polypheme," as far as Point Barrow, east of Kotzebue Sound.

Other explorers gave their attention to the interior. Glazúnof ascended the Yukon, which was then known as the Kvikpak, and was the first to make the portage between the Yukon and the Kuskokwim Rivers. Another explorer, named Rosenberg, penetrated from the Nugashak River to the Kuskokwim, and from there to Nulato on the Yukon, where he established a station which was afterwards destroyed by the natives. Certainly the exploits of the brave explorers sent out by the Russian-American Company, or by such men as Count Rumyantsof, who, at his own private expense, despatched Naval Lieutenant Kotzebue to explore the Arctic, and whose name is deservedly attached to mountain, cape or island in the far north, calls for the highest admiration. Through terrible deprivations, meeting almost insuperable

difficulties, and enduring horrible sufferings, these men added greatly to the sum of human knowledge.

Captain Kuprianoi took steps to sell the California Colony, which, owing to the incapacity of the Russians as farmers, had not succeeded. During his administration, a destructive epidemic of smallpox broke out among the natives. It appeared first at Sitka, in 1836, and carried off four hundred of the Koloshi. Strangely enough, only one Russian suffered from the malady, and in his case it was not fatal. It spread to remote settlements. On Kadiak, seven hundred and thirty-six persons died. Vaccination proved efficacious where it was practised, but many of the natives had superstitious fears of it and refused to submit to it. On Unalaska, Dr. Blashke, the resident physician of Sitka, vaccinated more than a thousand natives, and only a little more than ten per cent. died; whereas, in the district comprising Cook's Inlet, Prince William Sound, and Bristol Bay, more than a third of those attacked perished.

The disease was not stamped out until 1840, when Captain Etolin, a successful explorer of the regions north of Bering Sea, succeeded Baron Wrangel. This new manager was confronted by serious difficulties, owing to the immense loss in the native population and the consequent starvation which threatened the settlements. Etolin decided to concentrate the inhabitants in a few large villages, the chiefs of which were held responsible for securing food and dealing out the stores that were to be collected.

The following year, the Russian-American Company applied for a renewal of its charter, which the Government seemed in no hurry to grant. When it was renewed, however, it made some changes in the management of the Company's affairs, but the chief control was still vested in the hands of men selected from the navy. This explains the zeal for exploration, and the fact that the trade of the Company by no means kept pace with its expenses. Petrof says:—

“After Baránof's departure, not a single practical merchant or business man had the management of colonial affairs, and the conse-



quence was that the dividends diminished every year, while at the same time, according to the official reports to the Directors and to the Imperial Government, the colonies seemed to be flourishing and developing rapidly. Each succeeding chief manager seemed to think only of making the greatest display of continued explorations, erection of buildings, construction of ships of all sizes, and the establishment of industries and manufactories.

“ The shipyard at Sitka was complete with all kinds of workshops and magazines, even having brass and iron foundries, machiné<sup>d</sup> shops, and nautical-instrument makers. Experiments were made in the manufacture of bricks, woodenware, and even woollen stuffs of material imported from California. For all these enterprises the skilled labor had to be imported from Russia at great expense, and this circumstance alone will explain the failure attending the attempts. Vast sums were also wasted in endeavors to extract the iron from a very inferior grade of ore found in various sections of the country. The only real advantage the Company ever reaped from its many workshops at Sitka was the manufacture of agricultural implements for the ignorant and indolent rancheros of California; thousands of plowshares of the very primitive pattern in use in those countries being made in Sitka for the California and Mexican markets. Axes, hatchets, spades and hoes were also turned out by the industrious workmen of the Sitka shipyard, while the foundry was for some time engaged in casting bells for the Catholic missions on the Pacific Coast. Many of these bells are still in existence, and bear witness to the early, though perhaps abnormal, industrial development on our northern coast.”

Some of the trade ventures proved unprofitable, but no one can ever tell when the reward of patient waiting is to come; and at the breaking out of the California gold fever, the Company's storehouse, which was packed with unsalable goods, was at the last relieved. Even the most shop-worn articles were sold at great profit.

Never suspecting the incalculable riches that lay, scarcely hidden, in the beach-sands and the mountain-valleys, the director despatched a

party of Aleuts, under command of a subordinate, to take up and work a claim, but the results did not justify the outlay. Not more successful was the attempt of Lieutenant Doroshin to prospect for precious metals in Alaska. He was an experienced mining-engineer and had graduated from the College of Mines. To be sure, he discovered gold in the vicinity of Cook's Inlet, but the labors of forty men under his direction produced only a few ounces of gold-dust, and he advised that the experiment should be discontinued.

Doroshin was handicapped in many ways. Several years later, he wrote: — "The small result of my labors has cooled the ardor of the chief manager of the colonies for gold seeking. I do not cease to hope, however, that later some other engineer will be more fortunate in the path pointed out by me, with better means than were at my disposal. In that case, of course, nobody will think of him who first found gold where there were no ancient diggings, where no grains of gold were found in the crop of a grouse, and where the natives have not even a name for the precious metal."

Coal had been discovered many years before in the southern part of the Kenai peninsula, but only sporadic attempts had been made to make use of it. Owing to the demand for it in California, a company was formed in San Francisco, which, in conjunction with the Russians, undertook to exploit the mines. Machinery was brought around from the Eastern States, but the coal then worked did not meet expectations. The Company's ships supplemented their services by carrying ice from Sitka and Kadiak to San Francisco. At first this enterprise was profitable, the ice bringing as high as \$75 a ton.

The outbreak of the Crimean War very much limited the transactions of the Russian-American Company, although it entered into an agreement compact of neutrality with the Hudson Bay Company. A few of their ships fell into the hands of the English, the greatest loss being that of the "Sitka," which was just about entering the port of Kamchatka, after a very successful voyage, but was brought to by a British cruiser and forced to surrender. The war also seriously interfered

with the operations of the Russo-Finland Whaling Company, which, at the suggestion of the chief manager, had been organized as a means of competing with the American whalers who penetrated Alaskan waters, and even landed on the Aleutian Islands to try out the blubber. These whalers paid no attention to the terms of the treaty forbidding either English or American ships to hunt or fish within three marine leagues of the shore, and the Company offered to defray the expenses of a Russian cruiser stationed on the coast to guard it against such intruders. When the estimated cost of its equipment and maintenance was reported to the Company, however, they decided that it was out of the question.

The first Russian whaling ship, the "Suomi," was built at Abo in Finland, and was sent out, with a crew of thirty-six men, under a German captain. The whale-boats were imported from New Bedford. Its first voyage resulted in a profit of thirteen thousand rubles; but on its way home from the Hawaiian Islands, it narrowly escaped capture at the hands of the English. Afterwards, it was blockaded at Bremen, and was sold for twenty-one thousand rubles. The second ship, the "Turko," had also a narrow escape. Under still another German captain, and with a crew of Finlanders, loaded with a cargo of goods for the Russian-American Company, it reached Sitka after a tempestuous voyage. Its first catch in Alaskan waters was very profitable. It underwent the famous siege of Petropavlovsk, where the English-French fleet failed to reduce the town; ran the blockade, and arrived safely at Sitka. The third ship, the "Aian," after a fairly successful catch of whales, was herself caught by a British frigate, and burnt.

Meantime, the affairs of the Russian-American Company were going from bad to worse. Looking back at the opportunities that were presented, it seems amazing that with such riches in their hands, the management should have so egregiously failed. But it is in great measure explained by the fact that the people in control lived so far away, while the chiefs sent out, one after another, were not trained in mercantile affairs.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ALASKA BECOMES UNITED STATES TERRITORY.

**T**HE Company tried in vain to induce the Imperial Government to relieve it of the expense of maintaining its authority. After the Crimean War, this became a practical impossibility, owing to the vast expenditures that had been wasted in the struggle with France and England. Instead of renewing the Company's charter, the Russian Government, aware that it could not defend Alaska, and never desiring to occupy it, secretly approached the United States Government with an offer to sell the Russian possessions in America. This was first broached in 1859. In 1861 it was regarded as a certainty at Sitka, but the Civil War was then raging, and nothing was done about it. Had the Hudson Bay Company then seized its opportunity, Alaska would be to-day British territory. The purchase was advocated by San Francisco speculators, especially by the American-Russian Coal and Ice Company, which, being already on the scene, had good reason to expect fat plums as the successor to the Russian-American Company.

In 1865, the Western Union Telegraph Company sent an expedition to Alaska to carry its line up to Bering Strait, where it was to be connected with Siberia by a short cable. The project was rendered needless by the successful laying of the Atlantic cable, but a considerable amount of exploration and surveying was accomplished by such men as Colonel Bulkley of the United States Army, Mr. William H. Dall, and others, whose work contributed much to the knowledge of the country, and doubtless had the preponderating influence toward its ultimate purchase. Robert Kennicutt, who was director of the scientific corps of the expedition, explored the head waters of the Yukon, but

while he was at Nulato, a place of sinister memories, he died suddenly of heart-failure, superinduced by his exertions on the day before in saving the life of a Russian whose canoe had been caught in the ice. He went out early in the morning, and his friends, alarmed by his long absence, found his body near the river. His open compass, and calculations traced in the sand, showed that he had been at work even to the moment of his death. William H. Dall was appointed his successor, and conducted investigations into the ethnology and topography of Alaska, and his reports have ever since been regarded as standard sources of information.

In March, 1867, just before the adjournment of Congress, William H. Seward, Secretary of State, was engaged in playing a game of whist with members of his family, when he was interrupted by a late call from Baron Stoeckl, the Russian ambassador, who came to announce the arrival of a despatch from Petersburg conveying the Emperor's assent to the cession of Alaska to the United States. The consideration was to be "a cash payment of \$7,000,000, with an additional \$200,000 on condition that the cession should be free and unincumbered by any reservations, privileges, franchises or possessions by any associated companies, corporate or incorporate, Russian or any other." The game of whist was abandoned; Seward and the Ambassador collected their clerks, and before sunrise the treaty was ready for transmission to the Senate.

Sumner said: — "The present treaty is a visible step in the occupation of the whole North American Continent; as such it will be recognized by the world, and accepted by the American people. But the treaty involves something more. By it we dismiss one more monarch from this continent. One by one, they have retired; first France, then Spain, then France again, and now Russia — all giving way to that absorbing unity which is declared in the national motto, 'E pluribus unum.' "

The treaty, which was adopted by the Senate, in spite of fierce opposition and almost universal ridicule, was signed in the following May.

The transfer of the sovereignty was attended by interesting formalities. United States troops arrived at Sitka, on the "John L. Stevens," from San Francisco, on the ninth of October, and found there the gunboats "Jamestown" and "Resaca." On the eighteenth, the "Ossipee" arrived, and in the afternoon of the same day, General Jefferson C. Davis, at the head of two hundred and fifty men, marched up to the "kekur," where stood Baránof's stronghold, over which floated the Imperial Eagles of Russia. There he was met by General George Lovell Rousseau, United States Commissioner, and by Prince Matsukof, acting chief manager and representative of Russia, with his wife, Captain Peshchurof, and others.

The United States fired the first guns, the Russians the second, and so on in an alternating salute, the echoes reverberating from the sides of Mount Verstovy. As the flag was lowered, the Princess burst into tears, and the Russians felt all the sadness that attends a failing cause. There is a somewhat apocryphal story told that the flag, as if reluctant to leave its proud eminence on the top of a lofty pine-tree staff, entangled itself in the halyards. A soldier was hoisted to the flag in a boatswain's chair, hastily rigged, and detaching it, dropped it to the ground, where it was caught on the bayonets of the Russian troops. Then the Stars and Stripes were hoisted to take its place, and again the cannon boomed from the ships in the harbor, this time the Russians leading in the salute. Then Captain Peshchurof, addressing General Rousseau, declared that by the authority of his Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, he transferred to the United States the territory of Alaska. The Americans present gave three rousing cheers, and the transaction was done.

Ivan Petrof says: — "The Princess Matsukof wept at the spectacle, and all nature seemed to keep her company, drenching to the skin all the participants in the ceremony. The native Indians in their canoes witnessed it from a distance, listening stolidly to the booming of cannon, and gazing with indifference upon the descending and ascending flags. Of the nature of the proceedings, they had a faint and imperfect

conception, but one thing they did realize — that the country they once imagined their own was now being transferred to a strange people, by what must have appeared to them a singular ceremony.”

He also gives a lively picture of the first activities of the new proprietors: — “ A number of business men had accompanied or preceded the commissioners of the two Governments, and the American flag was scarcely floating from the top of the flagstaff before new shops were opened, vacant lots covered with the framework of shanties, and negotiations entered into for the purchase of houses, furs, and other property of the old Russian Company, and in less than a week new stores had been erected, and two tenpin alleys, two drinking saloons, and a restaurant were opened.

“ Sitka, the town that for two-thirds of a century had known nothing beyond the dull, unchanging routine of labor, and a scanty supply of necessaries at prices fixed by a corporate body eight or ten thousand miles away, was profoundly startled even by this small ripple of innovation. To the new American domain flocked a herd of men of all sorts and conditions — Alaskan pioneers and squatters, and aspirants for political honors and emoluments in the new territory. Before the first sunset gun was fired, preemption stakes dotted the ground, and the air was full of rumors of framing a ‘ city charter,’ creating laws and remunerative offices, and it was not long before an election was held for town officers, at which over 100 votes were polled for nearly as many candidates.

“ The Russian population looked with wonder on this new activity. The families of the higher officials, as well as those of the farmer and laboring classes, opened their houses to the newcomers with true Russian hospitality; but, unfortunately, they did not discriminate, treating officers, merchants and soldiers alike, and in many cases their kindness was shamefully abused. Robberies and assaults were the order of the day, or rather of the night, until the peaceable inhabitants were compelled to lock their doors at nightfall, not daring to move about until the bugle sounded in the morning. . . .

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
WATER RESOURCES DIVISION



PACK TRAIN IN BOX CANYON, SKAGWAY TRAIL.



1000  
1000  
1000

“ The Russian-American Company was allowed two years in which to settle its affairs and to transport all the Russian subjects who wished to return. For this purpose, all its employees distributed throughout the territory were collected at Sitka, and from the time of the transfer to 1869 nearly a thousand were living there; and to these between \$40,000 and \$50,000 were paid every month as salaries, which, being regularly spent before the next pay-day, made business decidedly brisk. In addition to these Russians, there were two companies of soldiers and a few hundred American and other traders, while a man-of-war and a revenue cutter were always in the harbor, yielding a golden harvest to business men and saloon keepers.”

For Alaska, now began a tragic period that lasted for a third of a century, and can hardly be said, even now, to have resolved into an ideal condition of affairs.

The princess of the fairy tale, whose dowry was to be imperial, was utterly neglected by her cruel and heedless foster-mother. Finally, not through any sense of justice or decency, but because of her coming into her own, was something done to clothe her decently and protect her against those who had pillaged her, and were ready to continue their evil practices.

For a few years after the occupation of Alaska by the United States, detachments of the army were stationed at various points, but their duties were not specified by law. Within a month, difficulties arose between the garrison at Sitka and the Indians. A sentry, stationed near the powder-magazine, fired on natives prowling around, and wounded one of them. The next day their chief, in accordance with the Indian custom, demanded a pecuniary compensation from General Davis, who refused it. Thereupon, the chief retired to his village and raised the English flag. Davis threatened to bombard the village, and the Indians accordingly came to terms.

Two years later, in January, 1869, a party of Chilkat Indians were at Sitka. It is said their chief was presented with several bottles of whiskey, which, of course, had its usual effect. It brought about a

conflict between the Indians and the military. Several of the natives, belonging to three different tribes, were killed. They also demanded payment, and when it was refused, they began to make reprisals — life for life. Two prospectors, who had ventured into the country of the Kekhs, were killed. The report came that the crew of a wrecked schooner had been massacred. General Davis sent the “Saginaw” to avenge the supposed outrage. Three deserted villages were utterly destroyed. It was afterwards learned that the Indians, instead of having perpetrated any cruelty on the shipwrecked sailors, had rescued them and treated them kindly. After this, there were sporadic instances of hostility on the part of the Indians, generally caused by the misbehavior of uncontrolled adventurers — especially through the sale of liquor to the natives.

The history of the United States army in Alaska is difficult to disentangle. Many writers, undoubtedly influenced by the interested criticism of those who came into conflict with its regulations, are inclined to blame the men for all sorts of irregularities. One writer charges the commander-in-chief with having furnished native chiefs with whiskey. William Gouverneur Morris, who was Special Agent of the Treasury Department in 1877, in his report to the Secretary, wrote regarding drunkenness: —

“One of the direct evils of this detestable vice has been the debauchery and degradation of the native women by a licentious soldiery. Never particularly noted for an excess of virtue, they have become victims to their appetite for strong drink and inordinate lust, and they have fallen victims to the general contagion and ruin. I am aware this charge will provoke adverse criticism in certain quarters, and it is more particularly attributable to the years immediately succeeding the Russian purchase, with the advent of our troops, than when later garrisoned. But successful contradiction is invited. The facts are too naked to bear the light of investigation.”

On the other hand, General A. W. Greely, in his admirable handbook on Alaska, says: —

“ The activity of the army in carrying out its orders elicited bitter criticism. Reporting on the affairs at the Seal Islands, prior to the lease of the Alaska Commercial Company, it incurred enmity by officially stating that the Pribilof natives were suffering ‘ enslavement and robbery by an unscrupulous ring of speculators.’ As Indian wars gave local traders patronage and contracts, the tendencies to adjust troubles peacefully with the natives were viewed askant as unmilitary and unbusinesslike. To stimulate industry among the natives, it was recommended that Indians be hired to cut wood, which resulted in attacks from interested contractors. The army’s insistence that Alaska was an Indian country, where neither firearms nor liquor could be imported, was bitterly fought by traders and politicians before the department, and it was years before the army’s point of view was sustained by Congress and the courts. . . .

“ Finally — happy day for the service, though not for the territory — the army sailed away from Alaska, after, as we are told by a well-known writer, a service not highly creditable. This local judgment was natural, since the business methods of many of the early Alaskan captains of industry did not accord with the army ideals as to probity and propriety.

“ The army’s sins of omission and commission were not specified, but what it did may be stated. It had brought the Indians into a state of submission and peace — its military duty. Moreover, it had fed the starving, cared for the suffering, and nursed the sick; it had largely suppressed smuggling and illegal trade in arms and liquor; it had discouraged corrupt business methods, and protested against the enslavement and robbery of natives; it had vainly besought civil government and open day schools; finally, it had fostered morality by religious teaching of children, established the first Protestant Church in Alaska, and by its initiative, led the Christian people of the United States to extend a helping hand to the native of Alaska. These deeds are not strictly military duties, and while they are extra-legal acts

without warrant of law, they were justified by the law of emergency, and impelled by the obligation of our higher moral nature.”

The withdrawal of the troops from Alaska was recommended by General McDowell, who considered that it was in the interest of economy. He felt that the acquisition of such a detached territory was a detriment to the United States; he regarded it as of little value, and he would even have given it away for nothing to any country that would burden itself with its acceptance. Although he acknowledged that the “dozen or more whites and several hundred scrawny half-breeds who were there at the time of the purchase” ought fairly to be protected, he thought that three companies would be sufficient to enforce the authority of the Government, for he did not believe that there was any especial danger to fear from the Indians more than from the whites toward one another.

There was certainly little to fear from the natives as long as they were held in awe by a show of military force, but as soon as the troops were withdrawn, an entirely different condition obtained. Mr. Morris wrote:—“The Russians exercised over the inhabitants of Alaska despotic sway, and held them in absolute subjection. They treated them as brutes, and flogged them unmercifully for theft and petty misdemeanors. They punished crime promptly with severe corporal chastisement or imprisonment, and regarded the Indians as not more than one degree removed from dumb beasts. They held the power of life and death over their subjects. They had over two thousand soldiers, employees, and retainers ready to do the bidding of the supreme local authority. Ships of war were always at hand to bombard the villages into submission. The people were thus completely at the mercy of their rulers.

“When the sale to the United States took place, the forts were garrisoned with federal soldiers, new posts were located and built, and for years the country was under strict military rule. The Indians were taught several severe lessons by the soldiery and the gunboats, and they continued, to all intents and purposes, in their condition of serf-

dom until the country was formally abandoned by the War Department, and subsequently transferred to the sole control of the Treasury.

“ Suddenly they awoke to the knowledge that they were free men; that as far as outward appearances were concerned, there was no power or authority to interfere with their acts. They saw the outward change of things, and that the pomp and panoply of war had departed. They beheld the white man, Boston man and King George man, black man, yellow man, Chinaman, Indian, Aleut Eskimo, and men of all colors, nationality and nativity, all associating together upon the common terms of sweet republican simplicity. There was no authority at hand to punish the evil doer, no power to redress savage enormities.”

Mr. Morris went on to relate the result of an attempt to land some Chinese at Sitka. It is interesting as showing how the natives anticipated the objection of the whole Pacific coast to such rivalry. He had taken passage on the “ California,” intending to pay a visit to some distant fisheries. He says:—

“ I found on board the whole outfit and paraphernalia of the cannery intended by Mr. Hunter to be established at Sitka. He had some white employees, and eighteen Chinamen, who were hired exclusively to manufacture the cans. Upon reaching Sitka, as usual, the whole tribe, more or less, were found congregated on the wharf. As soon as the Chinamen were descried, a general howl arose, and the wildest excitement was manifested. Before the lines were made fast, runners started for the village, and the whole beach suddenly became in instant commotion. Old and young, lame, halt and blind, all started pell-mell for the ‘ Hea-then Chinese.’

“ Annah Hoots, the war chief, made a most inflammatory speech to the young bucks, to the effect that the Chinamen should not be permitted to land. Sitka Jack was present as a quiet spectator, seemingly not interested in the proceedings, but I could see he was taking everything in, and kept quiet in order to be more respected as the row progressed.

“ Annah Hoots could not speak Chinook, so Mr. Keen had to first

translate my words, and those of Mr. Hunter, into that language, to Jack, who subsequently repeated them to Annah Hoots in his own tongue. This took up much time, but the Indians, instead of calming down, became more and more excited. The situation was critical, and I firmly believe, had the Chinamen landed before a proper understanding was had, every man of them would have been ruthlessly murdered, and God only knows, when the sharks had tasted blood, where it would have ended."

It was finally made plain to the Indians, who really were very desirous of having the cannery established, that the Chinamen were not there to invade their privileges, that the plan was to buy all the fish of the Indians, that the Chinamen were to be sent away as soon as they had finished making the tin cans. Mr. Morris concludes his story:—

"Mr. Keen very adroitly impressed upon those present the folly of their course, and I am satisfied it was owing a great deal to the tact and judgment displayed by him that we succeeded as well as we did. I had but little to say, only to remind them that the 'man-of-war' was not far off, lying at Wrangell, and if they wanted a little gunnery practice, they should be speedily entertained.

"After a long powwow, a calm succeeded the storm; good humor as suddenly prevailed as their angry passions had become inflamed, and order reigned in Warsaw.

"In a very short time, as many Indians as could be profitably set to work were hired by Mr. Hunter to discharge his material. The Chinamen landed in perfect security, walked up town, hired a cabin from one of the tribe, purchased wood, and by nightfall were snugly domiciled, with half a dozen dusky klotchmen or squaws squatted on the floor, and enjoying their fish and rice.

"Thus ended what might have proved a very serious affair. But it only goes to show how utterly helpless are the white population when the anger of the natives is aroused."

The very next year, 1878, there being not even a revenue cutter in the harbor of Sitka, the Indians began to behave very insolently. They

defaced the graves in the Russian cemetery, pulled down stockades, and committed other outrages. The cause of the trouble is said to have been the refusal of Colonel Ball, collector of customs at Sitka, to pay six thousand blankets as indemnity for the lives of six Kake-se-tee men employed as sealers on the wrecked schooner "San Diego." The chief of the tribe then demanded six white men's lives, and when that also was refused, he prepared to attack the settlement. The Russian women and children were sent to the home of the priest; the Americans were housed in the custom house. The men were armed and prepared to sell their lives dearly. Annah Hoots took the side of the Americans, and went out with some of his clan to meet the attacking party. An engagement took place.

Before Kath-le-an, who went off for reenforcements, returned, the British man-of-war "Osprey" arrived in Sitka and furnished the inhabitants protection. The fact that American citizens had been obliged to appeal for aid to the soldiers of another nation was mortifying, and having been severely criticized by the press of the country, led to the station of a United States war-vessel in the harbor of Sitka.

All authorities agree as to the shameful neglect of Alaska and its inhabitants, both native and immigrant, by the United States after the country had been adopted. There were no courts for the settlement of lawsuits, no laws which could be invoked; there was no jurisdiction to decide title to lands; any man preempting a holding, and making expensive improvements, was likely to be ousted on the strength of a ruling by the Secretary of State that "such claims and settlements are not only without the sanction of law, but are in direct violation of the provisions of the laws of Congress applicable to the public domain secured to the United States by any treaty made with a foreign nation; and if deemed necessary and advisable, military force may be used to remove the intruders." No patent could be obtained to mining, milling, or lumbering properties. No provision was made for the conveyance of real estate, and no arrangements for any records. No mortgages could be made. A man dying in Alaska could not dis-



pose of his property there by will. There were no probate courts or judges. It was said that "a man might be murdered in Alaska, his will be forged, and his estate scattered to the four winds, and there would be no power to give redress." No debts could be collected. There were no mail facilities.

In such a condition of lawlessness, it is no wonder that a writer like General Greely declared that "civil conditions after the departure of the army can not be recounted without a sense of shame. A pandemonium of drunkenness, disorder, property destruction and personal violence obtained at Sitka, which eventuated in murder, followed by a threatened Indian uprising, and frantic appeals for protection, which was temporarily accorded by a British man-of-war." Nor is it any wonder that Mr. Dall should call Alaska "a country where no man could make a legal will, own a homestead or transfer it, or so much as cut wood for his fire without defying a Congressional prohibition; where polygamy and slavery, and the lynching of whites prevailed, and no legal authority to stay or punish criminals."

Attempts were made to induce Congress to act, but, apparently, no one had sufficient interest or eloquence to melt the indifference. In August, 1878, the "San Francisco Chronicle," after telling some of the outrageous acts perpetrated in Alaska, within three hundred yards of the seat of United States authority, said:—"It is a national shame and disgrace that such a condition of lawlessness should be suffered to exist in a Territory of the United States, and Congress can not undertake a more creditable work of legislation than providing a government for the people of that outlying territory of our common country."

In October, 1877, I. C. Dennis, the alert and courageous collector of customs at Fort Wrangel, sent in a petition signed by many residents, and accompanied by a dignified letter of protest. He said:—

"This petition is not our first effort in striving to be recognized by the Government as a people having rights worthy of consideration. We have petitioned and repeterioned to the heads at Washington to do something for us, and thus far our petitions have accomplished

nothing; hence we try again, and our prayer is that the present Congress will enact a law whereby whites and Indians in Alaska may obtain justice. We, as American citizens, claim an inalienable right that we are entitled to protection in life and property. Ten years have elapsed since the acquisition by our Government of this country, and during that time the Government has neither encouraged nor sanctioned the development of its resources. Nothing has been done toward improving the condition of its inhabitants, either intellectually or morally. All that has been done has had a tendency to stagnate our commerce, impede enterprise, and debase and demoralize the native inhabitants.”

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE MAGIC WAND OF GOLD.

**F**ROM the first appointment, in 1868, of treasury officials to look after customs receipts, it was evident that the new region was going to pay handsomely as an investment. The Alaska Commercial Company, which succeeded the Russian-American Company, assumed the lease of the Pribilof Islands, and, in 1869, agreed to pay a tax on seal skins and an annual rental. The amounts paid by this company alone, up to June, 1876, amounted to nearly two millions of dollars. But this large return did not awaken Congress. That was effected only by the discovery of gold, in ever increasing quantities.

In 1884, the laws of Oregon were extended to Alaska; a governor was appointed; also commissioners, and district courts were established; that is to say, these improvements existed on paper; the means for carrying them out was not provided. Not until 1899, when the gold production alone had risen to almost six million dollars a year, did Congress grant Alaska its first penal code, and a code of criminal procedure. The following year it provided a civil government, made the Territory a civil and judicial district, and moved the capital from Sitka to Juneau. The powers of the governor were enlarged; provision was made for caring for the insane; district courts were established for three districts; some attempts were made to settle the land question, and to provide for secondary education. In 1906, when the gold production reached the amount of more than twenty-two millions, Alaska was finally recognized as a Territory entitled to representation in Congress, but it had no legislative body, and still depends on Congress for all law and legislation.

It is certainly a romance of history, that this once despised land, which sensible men proposed to call "Walrussia" and "Icebergia," should, within less than twenty years, have added to the resources of the world in gold, one hundred and forty-two millions, and nearly forty millions in seal skins; while the grand total from furs, fisheries, and minerals, from 1868 to 1908, amounted to three hundred and twenty-seven million, five hundred and fifty-three thousand, six hundred and thirty-seven dollars; to say nothing of a constantly growing import trade in coal, lumber, hardware and machinery, provisions, liquors and the like, which amounted to nearly sixty millions of dollars in the last four years.

Is it not strange, that in view of all this, in the very latest authoritative book on Alaska, the author should be compelled to make this arraignment of Congress:—

"Judicial provisions are still inadequate to the needs of the country. In default of a supreme territorial court, appeals necessarily go to the Ninth Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals, causing serious delays and enhanced expenses. The Aleutian Islands are practically without courts, and the enormous area of the third judicial district—the Tanana and Yukon valleys—overtaxes the judge, delays trials, and enormously increases costs. Minor cases are tried before United States commissioners—stationed at about forty points—who are appointed and are removable by the district judges. The power of the commissioners is great, as they are committing magistrates, can try civil cases involving values to one thousand dollars, and criminal cases of certain classes, where not exceeding a year's imprisonment may be imposed. They are also empowered to perform almost every kind of judicial act pertaining to their own localities."

This El Dorado of the north has a hundred fold justified the predictions of Sumner and Seward. Had men of equal foresight and ability been in Congress at the time of the so-called Oregon compromise treaty, British Columbia might have been retained by the United States, and the whole Pacific coast from Southern California to Bering

Strait would have been an integral part of the United States. But even granting that the claims of the United States were justified, and that the whole disputed territory was ours, one need hardly go so far as to call it an "infamous" treaty. The country was better governed by Canada than it would have been had the United States taken possession of it, and the power and wealth of a friendly neighboring country is probably as advantageous to us as if we owned it.

The Alaska purchase gave the United States a strip of land, ten marine leagues in width, from the Portland Canal, that is to say, the southern limit of Alaska, to the vicinity of Mount St. Elias. After the discovery of gold in the Klondike, the Canadians put forth the claim that the so-called "lisière" should be measured from the general direction of the coast, and not from the head of the various inlets. This question came up during the session of the Joint High Commission on the settlement of pelagic fur sealing, and the British and Canadian members suggested that the United States should transfer to Canada, Pyramid Harbor, the best on that coast, and a strip of land across the "lisière," thus giving a desirable route to the Yukon. The question came up again in 1903, and the majority of the Commissioners decided that the Canadians had no right to the waters of any of the inlets, and that the original treaty between Russia and Great Britain meant that the strip transferred to the United States was intended to separate the bays, ports, inlets, and waters of the Pacific, north of British Columbia, from the British possessions.

Had the United States Congress realized that climatic conditions in the far northwest corresponded generally to those in the northwest of Europe, that the influence of the warm Kuro Siwo, or Japan current, is much the same on the coast of British Columbia and of Alaska as that of the Gulf Stream is on France and England, there might have been more interest felt in those distant regions.

The first gold production from Alaska, of any account, was extracted from placers at Windham Bay and Powers Creek, north of Fort Wrangel. Miners, who had been disappointed in the newly discovered Cas-

siar mines, went prospecting and took out about forty thousand dollars' worth in 1870. Ten years later, Joe Juneau and Richard Harris were sent by N. A. Fuller of Sitka to investigate the coastal belt between Windham Bay and Sullivan Island in Southeastern Alaska. By the middle of August they reached Gold Creek, and found rich gravels and quartz containing free gold. From ledges which they investigated, they brought away nearly half a ton of ore, and staking six placer claims and a dozen and more quartz claims for their employers and themselves, they returned with their prize to Sitka in November. In spite of approaching winter, a stampede of excited miners followed. Many locations were made, and this was the beginning of the present capital of Alaska. The following year, the "Treadwell" and other paying mines were located, and the town had a permanent population. Its first name was Rockwell, afterwards Harrisburg, but the seventy-two miners who held a meeting in December, 1881, voted to call it Juneau, in honor of the elder of the two discoverers, and the district was called after Harris. In two years' time, Juneau was the mining centre of Alaska.

The famous Paris lode, on Douglas Island, was transferred to John Treadwell by its original discoverer for the sum of five dollars. Before the new owner could establish his rights to hard-rock mining, placer-miners, who disputed them, had washed out several thousand dollars' worth of free gold. Many of them made handsome returns with an ordinary shovel and sluice-box.

The ore was of not very high grade, and a number of stamps were erected, at large expense, and never worked. Treadwell, however, associated with himself San Francisco capitalists, and, after obtaining what was regarded as sufficient ore to warrant the expenditure, a mill of one hundred and twenty stamps was erected in 1887. The returns from the Treadwell properties had amounted to not less than twenty four million dollars in 1903. That was exclusive of returns from other mines in the same belt.

The most exciting and dramatic episode in the history of Alaska

was the discovery of gold on the shores of that desolate far northern district separating Bering Sea from the Arctic Ocean, and now named Seward Peninsula, in honor of the great Secretary of State. Mr. Alfred H. Brooks, in his interesting sketch of the mining industry of the Seward Peninsula, says:—

“ A decade ago, Seward Peninsula was little more than a barren waste, unpeopled except for a few hundred Eskimos and a score of white men, whereas it is now the scene of intense commercial activity, supporting a permanent population of three or four thousand people, which in summer is more than doubled. Then, the igloo of the Eskimos and a mission were the only permanent habitations; now, a well-built town, with all the adjuncts of civilization, looks out on Bering Sea, and a dozen smaller settlements are scattered through the peninsula. This region, which then produced nothing except a few furs, now increases the wealth of the world annually by nearly eight million dollars. A decade ago, the only communication with the civilized world was through the annual visit of the Arctic whaling fleet and the revenue cutter; now, a score of ocean liners ply between Nome and Puget Sound during the summer months, and even in winter a weekly mail service is maintained by dog teams. Moreover, military telegraph lines, cables and wireless systems, and a private telephone system, keep all parts of the peninsula in close touch with the outer world. Railways, connecting some of the inland mining centres with tide water, traverse regions which a few years ago were almost unknown to white men.”

The first survey of the coast line of the Seward Peninsula was made by Captain Cook in 1778. Russians naturally first encountered this region because its westernmost point, Cape Prince of Wales, lies almost within sight of Siberia. Their first trading-post was established on St. Michael's Island in 1835, but little was done toward exploring the interior until thirty years later, when Baron von Bendeleben, in searching for a practical telegraph route, ascended the Niukluk River, crossed the portage to the Kruzgamepa and reached Port Clarence, where the whaling fleet had its summer rendezvous. According to William H.

Libby, who was a member of this expedition, Baron von Bendeleben found alluvial gold on the Niukluk River, but little importance was attributed to this discovery. In 1881, John C. Green, with a party of natives, traced the source of the leaden bullets that were in use in the eastern part of the peninsula. He followed up the river that empties into Golofnin Bay, and there located the mine of Galena, and organized a company to exploit it, under the title of the Alaska Gold and Silver, Milling and Trading Company. Some ore was shipped, but the mine is said never to have paid its expenses.

An employee of the company, named Sanderson, found alluvial gold on the Niukluk in 1892; natives also had reported its presence in the Nome region. Even when the luring wealth of the Klondike gold placers drew men by the tens of thousands to the interior of Alaska, and bands of prospectors, enduring every kind of hardship, were searching all the tributaries of the mighty Yukon, the rumors of gold on the Seward Peninsula had not as yet spread beyond its confines.

Prospectors, who had failed, gradually drifted into this region. About fifteen hundred men tried their fortune in the region of Kotzebue Sound, north of the peninsula, and failing, made their way to John Dexter's trading post on Golofnin Bay. Dexter had taught some of the natives how to wash out a pan of dirt, and an Eskimo, named Tom Guarick, while on a fishing or hunting trip, in August, 1897, brought back a half ounce of gold dust which he had found on Ophir Creek. In the following September, Daniel B. Libby, who had been a member of the Bendeleben expedition of 1866, and three other men, who had been sent by San Francisco capitalists to try their luck in "grub-staking," landed at Golofnin Bay and saw this gold. They engaged the Eskimo, Tom Guarick, as a guide, and he led them to the creek, where they found that his discovery was no dream. They, and other adventurers, spent months in prospecting, and in April of the next year called a "miners' meeting and organized the 'Discovery District,'" and elected a recorder; all in accordance with the established custom in such cases. Although the miners were ill-equipped



for their work, they managed to make sluice-boxes from the spruce timber which the region provided, and these pioneers, who may have numbered two or three hundred men, took out during the first season perhaps one hundred thousand dollars' worth of the precious metal. But the news of it did not excite interest even at St. Michael's, only a hundred miles away — a fact explained by Mr. Alfred H. Brooks, who was there at the time, for the two-fold reason that "the first Alaskan public had become tired of unfounded rumors of rich discoveries, and, second, the excavations on Ophir Creek had not, by any means, gone far enough to prove the great richness of its gravels."

It having been reported that a government reindeer-hunter had discovered coarse gold on the Sinuk River, which is one of the largest of the southern watersheds of the peninsula, four men started out in a small boat, and were storm-bound near what is now the town of Nome. They found specimens of fine and even coarse gold on the bar of Snake River, and on what was afterwards called Snake Creek. This did not satisfy them, and they proceeded to Sinuk, there finding nothing. So all of them returned to Golofnin Bay. J. J. Brynteson, one of the party, a native of Sweden, and an experienced coal and iron miner, who had come to Alaska to prospect for coal, was not satisfied with the hasty survey of the Snake River district, and in September, with two other men, he quietly set out for a closer investigation. His two companions were a fellow Swede, Erik O. Lindblom, a tailor by profession, who had been lured to Kotzebue Sound by fabulous reports of gold there; and Jafet Lindeberg, a native of Norway, who had come to Alaska to help Dr. Sheldon Jackson in procuring reindeer. Lindeberg gives a simple and graphic account of the world-famous discovery which he and his two companions made:—

"We three men met by chance at Council City, in August, 1898," he says in a letter to Mr. F. L. Hess of the Government Survey, "and after prospecting around in that district for some time and staking claims, formed a prospecting companionship, and decided to prospect over a wider range of territory. Even at this early date, the Council

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ESKIMO AND KAYAK IN THE SURF.

City District was overrun by stampeders, and staked to the mountain tops; so we proceeded to Golofnin Bay, and taking a large open boat and an outfit of provisions, on September 11, 1898, started up the coast toward Port Clarence, stopping at the various rivers to prospect on the way, in which we found signs of gold but not in paying quantities, and finally arrived at what is now known as the town of Nome. From there we proceeded up Snake River, which we named, and camped at the mouth of Glacier Creek, prospecting as we went along. The first encouraging signs of gold we found on the banks of Snake River were at about the place where Lane's pumping plant is now located. After locating our camp as before mentioned we proceeded to prospect along the tributaries of Snake River, which tributaries we named as follows: Anvil Creek (taking the name from an anvil-shaped rock which stands on the mountain on the east side of the creek), Snow Gulch, Glacier Creek, Rock Creek, and Dry Creek, in all of which we found gold in paying quantities, and proceeded to locate claims, first on Anvil Creek, because we found better prospects in that creek than in the others, and where we located the 'discovery claim' in the name of us three jointly. In addition to this, each man staked a separate claim in his own name on the creek. This was the universal custom in Alaska, as it was conceded that the discoverer was entitled to a discovery claim and one other. After locating on Anvil Creek, claims were staked on Snow Gulch, Dry Creek, and Rock Creek, after which we returned to Golofnin Bay and reported the discovery.

“ It was then decided to form a mining district, so we three original discoverers organized a party, taking with us Dr. A. N. Kittleson, G. W. Price, P. H. Anderson, and a few others, again proceeded to Nome in a small schooner which we chartered at Golofnin Bay, purchasing as many provisions as we could carry on the boat, and on our arrival the Cape Nome mining district was organized, and Dr. A. N. Kittleson elected the first recorder. Rules were formulated, after which the party prospected and staked claims, finally returning to Golofnin Bay for winter quarters. The news spread like wildfire, and

soon a wild stampede was made to the new diggings from Council City, St. Michael, and the far-off Yukon.

“ At this period very few mining men were in the country, the newcomers in many instances being from every trade known. The consequence of this was soon well known; a few men with a smattering of education gave their own interpretation to the mining laws, hence jumping mining claims soon became an active industry. Especially from Council City came the jumpers, who were the original men John Dexter, by an Eskimo, had guided to the first discovery of gold on the Seward Peninsula. They were angry to think that they had not been taken in at the beginning, so a few of them promptly jumped nearly every claim on Anvil Creek, although there was an abundance of vacant and unlocated ground left which has since proved to be more valuable than the original claims located by us and our second party who helped us to form the district. This jumping, or relocating of claims by the parties above named, poisoned the minds of all the newcomers against every original locator of mining claims, and as a consequence every original claim was relocated by from one to a dozen different parties.

“ At that time L. B. Shepard was United States commissioner at St. Michael, and in no case did a jumper have a chance to profit by his villainy, if Judge Shepard could prevent it. Another strong factor for good government at St. Michael and vicinity was Capt. E. S. Walker, of the United States Army. With exceptionally good judgment and a fearless attitude he held the lawless element in check, and great credit should be given him.

“ In the early months of 1899 we hauled supplies to the creeks, and as soon as the thaw came began active mining on Snow Gulch and on Anvil Creek. Soon a large crowd flocked to Nome, which was then known as Anvil City. Among this crowd was a large element of lawless men who soon joined forces with the Council City jumpers, and every effort was made by them to create trouble. Secret meetings were held and a plan formulated whereby arrangements were made to

call a mass meeting of miners, and at this meeting declare all the acts of the original miners' meeting that organized the district invalid, and to throw open all claims for relocation. This nefarious scheme leaked out, and word was sent to Captain Walker at St. Michael, who promptly dispatched Lieutenant Spaulding with a detachment of troops to Nome. A few days after their arrival the projected mass meeting was called. Here the agreed-on resolutions were offered, which, if passed, would have created bloody riot. Lieutenant Spaulding dispersed the meeting, receiving the thanks of the entire mass of law-abiding citizens of Nome and vicinity for this act, . . . and had it not been for the military, who proved themselves to be the true men to the American Government, much riot and bloodshed would have resulted from the conduct of the aforementioned parties."

The vanguard of prospectors, arriving too late to do any mining, spent their energies in staking claims, using a power of attorney for such friends as they could call to mind. In this way, though the mining laws prescribed the limits of claims, forty men preempted an average of nearly two hundred acres apiece. Occasionally, rich finds were made. One nugget taken out from Anvil Creek weighed one hundred and eight-two ounces, and brought three thousand two hundred and eighty-five dollars.

The nearest post office was one hundred miles away, across Norton Sound, and there were no mails after the winter season began. But before the ice broke, rumor had winged its way up the Yukon to Dawson, and when June came there was a population of some four hundred, living in tents and driftwood shanties. Steamers reaching Seattle during the summer spread the news, and started a fresh stampede. The thousands who reached Nome from the States, and from the upper reaches of the Yukon, found themselves frozen out; or, so, at least, they thought; for they did not attempt to locate new placer grounds.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### OUTSIDERS AND INSIDERS AT NOME.

**M**R. ALFRED H. BROOKS describes the exciting period that followed:—“ Meanwhile, in the early summer, there was anything but a contented community at Nome. The newcomers had found the whole region covered with location notices and very little mining being done. The professional claim stakers had followed their usual practice of blanketing the creeks with location notices, under powers of attorney, and then holding many claims without doing any prospecting, in the hope of being able to take advantage of any discoveries made by the labors of others. In the early part of July probably less than seven hundred men were actually engaged in mining, while upward of a thousand were idle, with neither prospect of employment as miners nor opportunity to prospect in the district. It should be remembered that at that time gold had been found in only a very small area adjacent to Anvil Creek. These idle men believed that many of the locations were illegal, as they unquestionably were under a strict interpretation of the statutes, for as the law requires an actual discovery of gold on each claim it is obvious that a man who staked twenty to thirty claims in a few days could not have determined the presence of gold in them. It was also charged that many claims had been located by aliens and were therefore not legal preemptions. Under these conditions it is not to be wondered that an era of ‘ claim jumping ’ began, during which practically every property of any prospective value was restaked. It was then not uncommon to find a claim corner marked by half a dozen stakes, each of which represented a different claimant.

“ The nearest United States commissioner was at St. Michael, and there was therefore practically no means of enforcing civil law. In fact, there were no representatives of the Government at Nome except an officer and a small detachment of soldiers which had been sent over from the army post at St. Michael in the spring. On the commandant of this handful of soldiers rested the responsibility of maintaining law and order among a thousand discouraged and angry men, a task made all the more difficult because he was without any actual legal authority. He deserves credit for meeting the situation as far as it lay in his power by patrolling property to which there were rival claimants and by attempting to settle the constantly rising disputes. Discontent was rife, and matters went from bad to worse. July 10 a so-called ‘ miners’ meeting ’ was called for the purpose of discussing the situation, and a resolution was there presented setting forth the grievances of those who believed that the claim locations had not been made in accordance with the United States statutes. While it must be admitted that the unlimited staking was undoubtedly illegal, yet this meeting was mainly attended by those who, for one reason or another, had not succeeded in getting hold of placer claims. . . .

“ This meeting, though no doubt tending to increase the dissatisfaction, was entirely within the legal rights of the individuals who believed that they had been wronged. Therefore the peremptory dispersing of the crowd attendant at the meeting by the commandant of the troops was a high-handed proceeding, entirely unwarranted either in law or equity. The tension grew day by day, and conflicts between rival claim owners became not infrequent.”

The military authorities had been sent over to Nome from St. Michael's, at the request of Dr. A. N. Kittleson, the recorder of the district, who reported that the original “ stakers,” while attempting to work their claims, “ were obliged to stand over them with guns all the time to prevent them from being overrun by parties of gamblers, professional jumpers, and other riffraff.”

The outsiders demanded that the original claims, which had been



laid out thirteen hundred and twenty by six hundred and sixty feet, according to the statute, should be reduced to five hundred feet in length, and they proposed to do so by force. At the miners' meeting, a resolution was introduced declaring all locations void, and it was arranged that as soon as it was passed, the men who had been stationed on Anvil Mountain should be notified by a bonfire at Nome. They could then rush down and restake the claims on Anvil Creek. The lieutenant and two of his men, who were stationed on the platform, ordered that the resolution should be withdrawn within two minutes. This was done. But, nevertheless, many of the claims were jumped, and gave rise to long litigation. The Company is said to have spent more than two hundred thousand dollars in lawyers' and court fees to retain its property.

Mr. Brooks continues the story:—"The situation was suddenly relieved in an unexpected manner. It was accidentally discovered that the beach sands were rich in gold. It appears that the beach placers were found almost simultaneously by a soldier of the barracks and John Hummel, an old Idaho prospector who was too sick to leave the coast. Within a few days the mutterings of discontent were almost silenced because it was found that good wages could be made with rockers on the beach. All the idle men went to work as fast as they could obtain implements. As it gradually became known that the beach sands for several miles were gold bearing and could be made to yield from \$20 to \$100 a day to the man, a veritable frenzy seized the people of Nome. A large part of the population went to work with shovels and rockers. During the height of the excitement it is estimated that there were 2,000 men engaged in beach mining. The yield of the beach placers is estimated at more than \$1,000,000, and this was practically all taken out with hand rockers in less than two months.

"There was one legal complication relative to beach mining which threatened to be serious, but ended rather ludicrously. Previous to the discovery of the beach gold many so-called 'tundra claims' had been staked, which stretched inland from the ocean. A group of these,

including the richest beach deposits, had been segregated and passed into the control of one company. When beach mining began this company claimed that it owned the beach and warned off all trespassers unless they paid a royalty of 50 cents a day for the privilege of mining along the water front. Most of the miners, however, contended that a 60-foot strip from high water was public property and paid no heed to the warning against trespassing. The company thereupon appealed to the commandant of the troops, and he warned off all beach miners. The order was not obeyed, and he finally arrested about three hundred men. At this time the situation reached the point of absurdity. There being no civil magistrate at hand before whom these men could be tried, no building in which they could be confined, nor any funds from which they could be supported while awaiting trial, the perplexed officer was forced to discharge all his prisoners, who promptly returned to their rockers on the beach. Later decisions of the Land Office have not upheld the claims of this company to the gold in the beach, for a sixty-foot strip of the beach has remained open for mining to all comers."

The town on the beach was first called Anvil City; during the summer of 1899, it was renamed Nome, possibly from the Eskimo word "Kinome," signifying "I don't know;" and its population of more than three thousand was sheltered in such shacks as could be secured. Lumber at one hundred and fifty dollars a thousand made frame houses luxuries for only the very prosperous. Coal at one hundred dollars a ton was not in the reach of all. The driftwood on the beach was husbanded as if it were gold. The tents, shacks and cabins stretched along a muddy street for a mile, flanked by the treeless Siberian tundra, and facing the wild surf of the cold, shallow sea.

Corner lots, with titles as uncertain as the shifting sands, were sold as high as ten thousand dollars. The population met and elected a Mayor and Town Council, and by common consent, this City Government, though without definite legal authority, made and enforced suitable ordinances. A Fire Department and Police Department were

organized; the Government established a Post Office; and the "Nome News," the first newspaper, began publication. Wages were paid as high as two dollars an hour. Though there were dozens of saloons and gambling-houses, where many a successful adventurer spent at night all that he had got during the day, still the condition of affairs seemed amply to justify General Greely's assertion "that as a whole, the inhabitants of Alaska are the most law-abiding body of men" that could be found. There was a great deal of illness from the effects of exposure, and especially from an epidemic of typhoid fever caused by the use of the surface water of the tundra.

The result of the excitement aroused by the arrival at Seattle of some three million dollars' worth of gold is well described by Mr. Brooks:— "Professional promoters and stock jobbers were not backward in taking advantage of this excitement, and there was the usual crop of flamboyant prospectuses. Scores of companies were incorporated to mine gold at Nome and much stock was sold. Though not a few of these ventures were intended to be legitimate enterprises, practically all of them were doomed to failure because of the complete ignorance on the part of many of the promoters of the character of the deposits, suitable methods of mining, and general commercial conditions. Beach-mining enterprises were the favorite because of the supposed richness of the placers, and especially because no capital was required to purchase claims. The almost incredible record of the first year's beach mining appealed to the popular mind, and its interest was maintained through the newspapers and through transportation and mining companies' circulars, which published the most preposterous statements. Not a few so-called mining experts asserted that the gold in the beach was inexhaustible because the supply was constantly renewed by the waves from the ocean bottom. It was easy to maintain that, if a man with a rocker could make \$20 a day on the beach, a plant which could handle twenty times as much material would yield untold wealth. There was a flood of gold-saving devices, varying from a patent gold pan hung on a pivot and turned by a crank to complex

aggregates of wheels, pumps, sieves, and belts, which required a 100-horsepower engine for their operation.

“ ‘ The golden sands of Nome ’ was the slogan which inspired thousands to engage passage for the El Dorado months in advance of the sailings. Reaching Nome was far easier than going to the Klondike, for the gold seeker could be landed at his destination from an ocean steamer. Here there was no winnowing of the persevering and enterprising from the shiftless and indolent as at the Chilkoot Pass (the gateway of the Klondike). In consequence, the crowd of men that reached Nome were less well fitted for frontier life than those who went to Dawson.

“ In 1900 the ice on Bering Sea broke early, and some small vessels skirting the shoreward side of the ice floes dropped anchor at Nome the latter part of May, but the large steamers did not arrive until the middle of June. By July 1 upward of 50 vessels had discharged passengers and freight on the beach. It is estimated that the first and second sailings brought over 20,000 people to the peninsula. There was then a solid row of tents stretching along five miles of the beach, and the water front was piled high with freight of all kinds. The newcomers found little to encourage them. Those that had wintered in the peninsula had industriously extended their stakes so that a man could travel for days and hardly be out of sight of a location notice. To add to the discouragement and confusion, smallpox was introduced from one of the vessels, and had it not been for the prompt action of Capt. D. H. Jarvis, of the Revenue-Cutter Service, it would have become a serious epidemic. The inexperienced men who landed at Nome, not finding the El Dorado their fancies had painted, were loud in their denunciation of the region. Many in the course of a few days' tramping of the beach became self-styled experts on placer mining and strenuously announced that the auriferous gravels of the peninsula had practically been exhausted.

“ During the month of July every conceivable kind of gold-saving appliance was installed on the shore, but few except those of simplest

design paid even running expenses. Nevertheless there can be no question that a strong company controlling a considerable strip of the beach could by the use of steam shovels have profitably extracted what gold had been left in the sands. But under the conditions of public ownership of the beach, if values were found in any given locality, men swarmed in with rockers and quickly worked it out. This made it impossible to extract the beach gold at a profit by other than light equipments readily movable from one rich spot to another.

“ Probably the most ill-conceived enterprises were those planned to dredge gold under the sea. Though the upper layer of these sands is more or less auriferous, the difficulties of excavation are such as to make it improbable that it can be profitably mined. The severe storms and lack of shelter prevent the use of dredges, except possibly during one month in the year. Many of these dredging schemes were based on a theory (held by some who were entirely ignorant of the origin of the beach gold and who refused to be instructed) that the auriferous sands are swept in from the sea. . . . On August 9 a severe south-westerly storm practically demolished the more elaborate appliances for gold saving and strewed the beach for miles with débris. This ended beach mining for that year except where the simplest apparatus was in use.”

The enormous amount of litigation, caused by jumping of claims and the actions of so-called “ pencil and hatchet men,” who located claims, not for legitimate mining but for speculative purposes, finally induced the Government to form a new judicial district, and appoint a Federal Judge. This court, however, proved to be corrupt; among its questionable acts was the placing of receivers over valuable property, “ from which they extracted gold, in spite of the fact that they were without bond, and that the rightful owners had no check on the amount of gold being taken out.”

This distrust of the judiciary, so well-founded, kept capital from investing in large enterprises, and the influx of thousands of inexperi-

enced men naturally led to tremendous suffering and disappointment.

Time, however, generally corrects abuses, and weeds out the incompetent. The careful survey of the peninsula, the settlement of litigation, the introduction of improved machinery and of sluicing ditches — estimated at an aggregate of three hundred miles in extent — in 1909, gave rise to the prediction of experts that the gold production in that region will increase rather than diminish. Its possibilities are roughly estimated at three hundred and twenty-five million dollars from the placer mines only, with no apparent limit to the exploitation of the mountains from which the gold has disintegrated.

Nome grew, like a mushroom, into a city of twenty thousand inhabitants, and at first there was a good deal of lawlessness, so that life and property were unsafe; but, as the undesirables were gradually weeded out, the town settled down into its summer and winter permanence.

Perhaps the most succinct summary of the recent history of Alaska may be found in an article by the Honorable Walter E. Clarke, the governor of the territory. He says: —

“ Ten years ago, Alaska was ‘ discovered ’ by a good many persons. Nine years ago, nearly twenty thousand of them started on that electrifying stampede to Nome. The site of the present town was a desolate tract of tundra when Lindeberg, Lindblom, and Brynteson discovered gold in a creek, four miles away, at the base of Anvil Mountain. In 1899, a good many miners stampeded from other parts of Alaska and from the Yukon Territory (Klondike), but the following year came the Rush of the Twenty Thousand. Some of the adventurous army half encircled the globe to reach the magic gold camp on Bering Sea. A good deal has happened since then. The riches of the Tanana Valley were not known until several years later, and Fairbanks, now perhaps the largest town in Alaska, is only half as old as Nome. Copper and coal have been uncovered in the southern part of the territory, and railroads are building. An ocean cable has been laid from Seattle,

and land-telegraph lines all over the territory are supplemented by a system of wireless telegraphy. Wagon roads and trails are being built by a commission of officers of the United States Army. More than twenty new lighthouses have been erected. Commerce has grown."

Governor Clarke well adds that a commerce of fifty million dollars a year deserves adequate protection against the perils of the coast line; and the tremendous deposits of copper and coal, which will undoubtedly supply the western coast for decades to come, will justify the expense of building railways into those Arctic wastes.

People fairly well informed, who would not think of asking the prospective visitor if he would go into the country over the ice, or would travel entirely with dog-teams, or suggest that Juneau was near Nome, or even take it for granted that the Klondike is in Alaska, have really little conception of the immensity of that territory, or of its chief characteristics.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE VASTNESS OF ALASKA.

**I**TS area, as far as recent surveys may be trusted, is not far from five hundred and ninety thousand square miles, equivalent to all of the United States east of the Rockies, with the exception of the Gulf States; or even to the combined area of the thirteen original States, including what is now Maine, besides Vermont, Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Ohio, and almost half of Washington; or, again, to more than twice all Germany. Sitka and the Pribilof Islands lie on nearly the same degree of latitude, and the southernmost limit of Alaska corresponds with Hamburg. Nome is twelve hundred miles northwest of Juneau, and two thousand and seven miles northwest of Seattle. From the Tongass National Forest, at the farthest east, the stretch is about sixty degrees of longitude — not far from twenty-five hundred miles; so that, in a certain sense, it is true that Attu Island, the last of the Aleutians, is farther west of San Francisco than San Francisco is west of Eastport. Its coast line amounts to not less than eleven thousand miles.

Mr. C. C. Georgeson, special agent in charge of Alaska Investigations, estimates that there are in the territory about one hundred thousand square miles, or one-sixth of the whole region, suitable for agriculture and pasturage. "As a matter of fact," he says, "the area is probably very much larger since a considerable part of the mountain territory will afford pasture." This is a little more than the area of the combined States of New York and Pennsylvania. Mr. Georgeson believes that Alaska can support a population of thirty persons to the square mile, and he instances Finland, which, geographically, is not unlike Alaska, and in fifty thousand square miles supports



a population of three millions. He says:—“ We have reasons for believing that Alaska may equal Finland in agricultural production. Temperature is the chief controlling factor in the production of agricultural crops, and the temperatures, both in the coast region and in the interior of Alaska during the growing season, compare favorably with the recorded temperatures of Finland. . . . Finland is a noted dairy country. The agricultural exports consist chiefly of butter, cheese, and beef from slaughtered dairy animals. In Alaska cattle feed can be grown in any quantity, and it can, therefore, also become a great dairy country.”

Although Congress has enlarged the homestead in Alaska to three hundred and twenty acres, lack of transportation facilities, or the excessive cost of transportation, restricts the number of people who would otherwise flock to the country.

The tourist who takes the usual summer trip to Alaska sees only the coast fringe of one district—the Sitkan or southeastern, which contains, according as it is reckoned, not more than a twelfth, or a twentieth, of the whole territory. There are five other divisions. Although, of course, it is impossible within the limits of a small volume to cover them all with much detail, we will visit them all in imagination, and try to picture to ourselves, in some adequate way, the wonderful region which the energy of man is beginning to tame to civilization.

All tourists agree as to the perfect charm of the steamship route to Sitka. Leaving either Tacoma or Seattle, and traversing the Strait of Juan de Fuca, skirting the mountainous island of Vancouver—key of the Pacific—for two hundred and seventy miles, through the often dangerous Discovery Passage, or Valdez Narrows, where so many shipwrecks have occurred, owing to the tremendous tidal current which runs through it, back and forth, at the rate of fourteen knots an hour; thence for forty miles across Queen Charlotte Sound, exposed to the sweep of the Pacific swells, and made misty by the Kuro Siwo; at length, after the long sweep of Hecate Strait, one reaches the boundary of Alaska, at the southern extremity of the Alexander Archipelago.

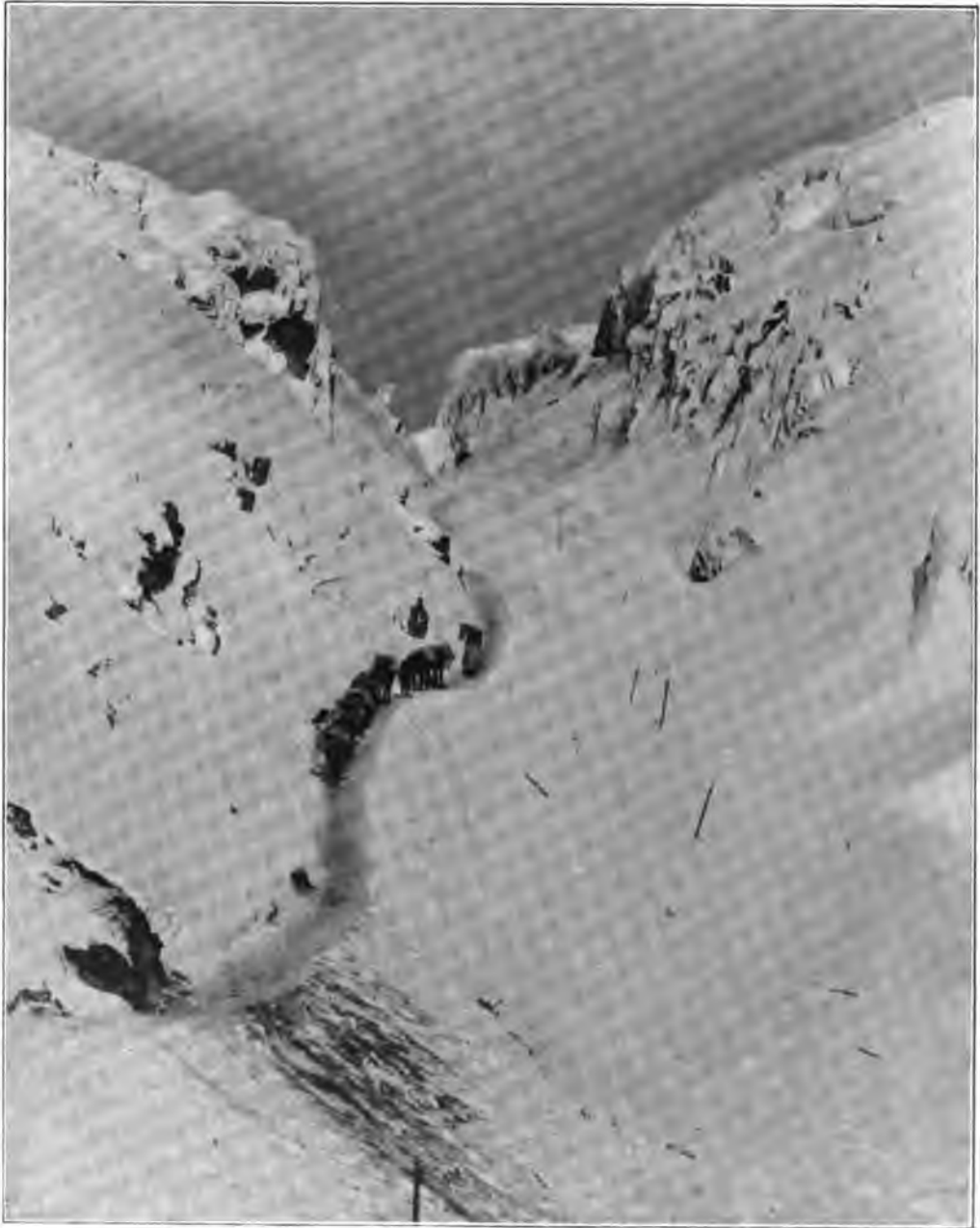
All the way there have been enchanting views of deep and picturesque fjords, of snow-clad mountains, and magnificent glaciers. Hundreds of islands have loomed up, as if to cut off further progress, but have, as it were, stepped aside, leaving narrow passages, where the greatest steamships could tie up to precipitous banks. The multitudinous islands, which form a fringe between the mainland and the open Pacific, nearly all the way from Puget Sound to Skaguay, Alaska — indeed one might say also from Prince William Sound to the very end of the Aleutian Islands — are evidently the peaks and summits of mountain ranges which have been sunk beneath the sea. The extreme depths of the water-ways correspond to the valleys in the inner mountains that run parallel to the coast; and the canals, arms, inlets, bays and fjords, that give such marvellous diversity to the coast, correspond to the passes and cañons on land.

Alaska is separated from British Columbia by Portland Canal, a deep fjord running for about a hundred miles, part of the way diagonally through the Coast Range, thus furnishing a comparatively easy pass into the Yukon basin. The steamships all stop at Ketchikan, which is the distributing-point for the great mining district of that region. For many years, salmon-fisheries and canning were the principal interest of the Ketchikan district. Salmon-fishers were among the first to discover the mineral wealth of that region. In 1892, James Bowden discovered gold in paying quantities on Annette Island. After the disappointing outcome of the Cassiar gold-quest, some of the argonauts returned to Ketchikan, and exploited the claims in that vicinity. The town, in 1902, had a population of about seven hundred. It is provided with excellent hotels and shops. Launches and sloops abound, and the tourist might spend many days in cruising among the fascinating islands of the archipelago.

He will surely wish to go to New Metlakatla, the home of the colony of Timpsean Indians, who, under the ministrations of William Duncan, have attained a high degree of civilization. William Duncan came to Fort Simpson in 1857, as a lay worker for the Church Mission So-

ciety. The Indians in that vicinity, amounting to perhaps ten or fifteen thousand men, were fierce savages. It was even charged that they were addicted to cannibalism, that they frequently ate the dead bodies of their relatives, even those who had died of disgusting diseases. But Sir George Simpson, who tells these terrible stories of them, also acknowledges that they were peculiarly comely, strong, and well-grown, and were ingenious in carving stone, wood and ivory.

Duncan settled among them, learned their language, inspired them with perfect confidence, and gradually induced them to adopt his ways of life. He established a community settlement about twenty miles south of Fort Simpson; and, with the assistance of the Indians, cleared a tract of land; built two-story cottages, a church, a school-house — octagon shaped, suitable for town meetings — a co-operative store, soap factory, blacksmith shop, saw-mill, and a salmon-cannery. He engaged assistants, and taught the young Indians carpentry, shoe-making, tanning, blanket-weaving, rope-making, and boat-building. A German music-master instructed them in singing and the practice of various instruments, and formed a band. A few years later, the English Church sent out a Bishop to superintend the missions. This Bishop Ridley entirely misunderstood the Indian character; he was narrow-minded and bigoted. Mr. Duncan realized that the Communion service, where the communicants are taught that they are eating the Body and drinking the Blood of God, was a dangerous ceremony for a people just emerged from cannibalism, and protested against it, but the Bishop was obstinate and opinionated. The friction between him and the lay-missionary grew more and more galling, and finally, in 1887, Mr. Duncan went to Washington and obtained permission to transfer his people to Annette Island. His mission proved successful, and the island was, in 1891, set apart as a reservation for the Metlakatans. Seven hundred of the Indians, taking with them only their personal belongings, and leaving their houses and all their other property, emigrated to this new wilderness, and there the old experiment was continued under somewhat new conditions.



LOOKING UP WHITE PASS SUMMIT.

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There they built a new saw-mill, a wharf, a well-appointed co-operative store, town-hall, a large church — attractive architecturally and steam-heated — and comfortable quarters for the tribe and their beloved missionary. Schools for the boys and girls are well attended. There is an excellent system of water-works, and a large cannery, the salmon for which is provided by the inhabitants. The community, or, one might call it, the Commune, own all these adjuncts to civilization, as well as several vessels. Natives, by the laws of the United States, are forbidden to do any mining. If this unreasonable law was abrogated, at least under certain conditions, undoubtedly Father Duncan's Indians would exploit the mines that have been discovered on his island. The natives themselves, in a big council meeting held in 1895, declared themselves in favor of a community title, the town council to grant allotments of land, for legitimate purposes, to individuals; but they did not favor a Government grant of individual titles to lots of one hundred and sixty acres each, as that was supposed to be prejudicial to the community interests. They also very sensibly demanded that all salmon streams should be declared Indian reservations, so that only proper persons, under proper conditions, should be allowed to operate them; the amount of salmon taken from each stream being limited, and all barricades forbidden by law.

The New Metlakatla community is governed by a council of thrifty members, under the direction of a president. There is a police force of twenty men. The system of taxes is adapted to maintain all the public institutions; the cannery and saw-mill belong to stock-companies controlled by the Indians. There are fine, wide sidewalks; and a band of twenty instruments plays on days when the steamer arrives.

All the members of the community are required to sign a declaration, in accordance with which they agree to reverence the Sabbath, to attend Divine worship, to take the Bible as their rule of faith, to regard all Christians as their brethren, to be truthful, honest and industrious, to be faithful and loyal to the Government and laws of the

United States, to vote when required, to obey the regulations of their Council, to educate their children, to abstain from all intoxicants and gambling, to refrain from heathen festivities, to carry out all necessary sanitary regulations, to identify themselves with the interests of the commune, and never to give away or dispose of their land to any persons who have not subscribed to the rules.

Mr. Duncan's experiment, in a communistic commonwealth for the natives, is justly regarded as an object lesson in the treatment of the Indians. In almost all other places, the story of the dealings of the whites with the aborigines is stained with horror. Mr. Henry S. Wellcome, in his "Story of Metlakatla," says:—

"This people, only thirty years since, consisted of the most ferocious Indian tribes, given up to constant warfare, notorious for treachery, cannibalism, and other hideous practices. Mr. William Duncan, with rare fortitude and genius, began single-handed a mission. He educated them and taught them Christianity in the simplest manner; at the same time introducing peaceful industries; and by these means he wrought, in a single generation, a marvellous transformation. Where blood had flowed continually, he founded the self-supporting village of Metlakatla, that will compare favorably with almost any village of its size in England or America for intelligence, morality and thrift."

The boundary between the Dominion and Alaska crosses the upper end of Dixon Entrance, so named after Vancouver's Captain Dixon, but also called Granitza Sound and Kygan Strait. It was originally named Perez Inlet, in 1775, by the discoverer, Bodegay Quadra. How unfortunate that the Indian names should not have been more frequently retained, instead of attaching to noble mountains and lordly waters the often ugly names of insignificant sailors! Then would Rainer have been Tacoma or Takoba, meaning Snowy Mountain; and Seymour Narrows would have borne the name of the Yakulta, the Lorelei of that wild pass; and many a beautiful island and river would have commemorated the vanishing peoples of those shores.

The controversy regarding the boundary, at some stages, grew acute. Fortunate it was that good councils prevailed, however; and the councils interested in the boundary question accepted the mediation of the German Emperor in determining the limitation of their respective possessions.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE NORTHWARD PASSAGE.

THE steamboat, as it makes its way toward the north, pushes through a perfect labyrinth of islands. One of the largest and most interesting is called Revillagigedo, after the viceroy of España Nueva. The natives called it "Naa" or "Na-ha," meaning "the distant (or fair?) lakes." It has been partially explored and geologically plotted, although it covers an area of more than a thousand square miles, approximating the size of Rhode Island. It is throughout mountainous, and remarkable for its beautiful scenery. The so-called Behm Canal almost encircles it, separating it from the mainland. It is cleft in two by Carroll Inlet, and its streams are famous for their profusion of salmon. In days not so remote, it was true that there was no room for the water, so thick were the fish, struggling to reach their spawning grounds! These are reached by a narrow stream, connecting with a chain of beautiful fresh water ponds or lakes. One of them is called Lake Adorable: it is four miles long and two miles wide, surrounded by magnificent forests. Tourists never tire of watching the salmon hurrying across it to reach the stream that connects it with the lakes beyond. Sometimes several bears, two varieties of which are found on the island, have been seen on the edge of the lake engaged in catching salmon. Formerly, there was a multitude of small red deer in the uplands, but the huntsmen, who, in a single year, destroyed twenty-five thousand for their hides, have almost exterminated them. The lakes also are breeding grounds for countless flocks of ducks and other wild feathered game.

Threading Tongass Narrows and Clover Pass — named after Rear-Admiral Clover of the United States Navy — one reaches the canning-

town of Loring, where this great industry may be seen in its perfection. The five principal varieties of Pacific salmon seem to follow a regular sequence in their run. First, in the early spring, come the tyee, the quinnat (Chinook) or king salmon, often attaining a weight of a hundred pounds. Stories are told of their growing to such a size that a cask will hold but four! Although abundant in the Alaskan rivers, they travel in pairs and not in schools. The flesh of this variety is pale and excellent. In June, appear the red salmon, or sockeye; averaging from six to ten pounds, tough and requiring long cooking; and actually blackening the waters in their abundance. They swim up the Yukon for eighteen hundred miles. Seven thousand have been taken in a single cast of the net. Then come the "kisutch" or silver salmon — most agile of fish — leaping high falls, and turning the rapids into cascades of life. The "gorbusha" or hump-back salmon, which Vancouver called hunch-back, and found unpalatable, appear in August. Besides these, there is the silvery dog-salmon (or calico), unsuitable for canning, but good fresh or salted. These fish are trailed by the malma, or Dolly Varden, and other varieties of trout eager for salmon-eggs.

Mrs. Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore gives a vivid description of the process of canning the fish. She says: — "The seining and outdoor work are done by white men, a few Indians being sometimes employed under them. While industrious to a degree, the Thlinkit can not be depended upon; and the native is too apt to strike, to start upon a prolonged potlatch, or go berrying or fishing on his own account, in the height of the salmon run. In the skilful manipulation of the cans and machines within doors, neither he nor the white man can approach the automatic exactness and dexterity of the Chinese, who, being paid by the piece, take no account of a day's working hours, and keep the machinery going as long as there are fish in the cannery.

"The fish are thrown from the arriving scows to a latticed floor, or loaded directly into the trucks and rolled into the cannery. The cleaner seizes a fish, and in two seconds trims and cleans it — behead-

ing, detailing, and rending it with so many strokes of his long thin knife. It is washed, scraped, cut in sections the length of a can, packed, soldered, steamed, tested, vented, steamed again, resoldered, lacquered, labelled, and boxed. The tin is taken up in sheets, and an ingenious machine punch rolls and fits the covers to the cans. These roll down an inclined gutter of melted solder, which closes the edges. The experts can tell, by a tap of the finger, if each can is air-tight. If not hermetically closed, the contents rapidly change, burst the cans in transit 'below,' or explode unpleasantly in distant markets."

Recently, a wonderful machine has been devised, which trims the fish far more quickly and economically than can be done by human hands.

In spite of the endeavors of the United States Fish-Commission, wasteful and ultimately ruinous methods of catching the salmon have not been suppressed. The products have steadily increased, until from an output of a little more than forty thousand dollars in 1878, it aggregated, in 1908, about ten millions — nearly one hundred and thirty million pounds — employing more than thirteen thousand persons. The Federal law of 1906 "levies license taxes on business and output; makes suitable exemptions for salmon-fry liberated; forbids obstructions against ascent of fish to spawning grounds; limits seine and other similar appliances; fixes methods and times of fishing in United States waters; authorizes preserves for spawning grounds; forbids canning or salting of fish more than two days dead; makes unlawful the wanton destruction of fish; proscribes misbranding; requires sworn annual reports from corporations; and authorizes the Secretary of Commerce and Labor to formulate regulations for the enforcement of the act."

When the enormous waste of the offal from the canneries — amounting to thirty-five million pounds in a single season, and equivalent to seven million pounds of excellent fertilizer and three or four hundred thousand gallons of oil — is saved, the profits of the canneries will be still greater.

The deep, narrow channel which runs nearly around Revillagigedo Island was called Behm Canal after Major Behm, who commanded the Russian port in Kamchatka at the time when Cook's ships wintered there. Vancouver was a midshipman on this voyage.

Occasionally a steamship makes the circuit of the island, the shores of which are extremely steep, the mountains in the interior rising to a height of several thousand feet. The view northward from Point Sykes at the entrance of the canal has been pronounced to be the finest in Southern Alaska. One of the features is the so-called New Eddy-stone Rock, which rises like a tower two hundred and fifty feet from the water with a circumference of less than one hundred and fifty feet.

There is an interesting engraving of it in the third volume of Vancouver's narration.

Opposite Revillagigedo lies the great Prince of Wales Island which is more than two hundred miles long and as large as the State of Delaware. It is very mountainous, the peaks rising to a height of three thousand feet, and its surface is broken by numerous bays and indentations, while channels and bays separate it from a host of larger and smaller islands toward the west. The mild climate, the thermometer rarely reaching zero, and the moist atmosphere have been favorable to vegetation and the splendid Alaska cedar here attains its highest perfection. Some of the large trees measure eight feet in diameter and attain a height of one hundred and fifty feet. The Chinese used to buy this wood of the Russians and after making it into boxes and chests or ornamental carvings palm it off as camphor or sandal-wood.

It is pleasant to note that during the administration of President Roosevelt the so-called Tongass Forest Reservation, an area of more than one thousand square miles, including the cedar groves of the great islands, was brought under national control. No timber may be exported from Alaska; and in spite of the apparently enormous supply which the tourist sees, covering the mountains often to a height of five thousand feet, the forests are largely confined to a narrow belt along the coast, and the larger part of the timber used in Alaska is imported.

Copper and gold have been found in the Alexander Archipelago and hundreds of claims have been entered. Some of them have been successfully worked.

The largest native village on the island was long famous for its display of totem-poles, guarding houses and the ruins of houses.

The Indians are of the Haidah or Hyda tribe who migrated from the Queen Charlotte group farther south. They were a warlike and treacherous people, and often made predatory incursions even as far south as Puget Sound. They are supposed to be of Japanese origin, as their own name Kaigan is Japanese, meaning seashore, and they have features resembling the Japanese. Their artistic talents, also, would seem to point to the same derivation.

The island is wonderfully diversified with bays and inlets. Besides the mines of copper and gold that have been recently exploited, there are deposits of excellent marble and granite. The forests are included in the United States Reservation.

Vancouver's "very remarkable barren, peaked mountain" at the north end of the island has been reported as a volcano.

Kasaan Bay penetrates into the interior for seventeen miles. It is named after the village of the redoubtable old chief Skowl, who was the Kamehameha of the Eagle Clan and ruled his people with an iron hand. No missionaries for him! On his totem-pole were carved the image of a priest, an angel and a book in derisive reference to the efforts to make "a good Indian" of him. His daughter was married to a Russian promýshlenik who was one of the first pelagic seal-fishers and he probably engaged also in smuggling. At his fishery on Karta Bay at the end of the Kasaan Bay United States customs officers found in 1885 forty thousand dollars' worth of prepared opium packed in barrels and ready to be imported in the guise of salted salmon. Skowl's name is preserved on or in a long-stretching inlet or arm.

A few miles farther south the island is almost cut in two by Cholmondeley Sound which reaches by a portage within less than four miles of Hetta Inlet and the safe landlocked reaches of Tlevak Strait.

Cholmondeley Sound is rendered interesting and beautiful by Eudora Mountain, which rises to a height of thirty-five hundred feet. This mountain is also reached by Moira Sound, which is famed for its beauty.

## CHAPTER XI.

### WRANGEL AND THE GLACIERS.

**T**HE steamship ploughs through the Duke of Clarence Strait which runs for more than a hundred miles between the two great islands. Its first stop is at Wrangel, or Vrangal, the second oldest town in Southeastern Alaska. It was built on the island of the same name by Lieutenant Dionisi Feodorovitch Zarembo, whose mission was to prevent the Hudson Bay Company from erecting trading-posts on the Stikine River. His action was contrary to treaty and the Russians had to pay a heavy indemnity, and lease to the Hudson Bay Company the thirty mile strip or lisière from Dixon Entrance to Yakutat. The English settlement was called Fort Stikine, but the name did not stick. The discovery of gold on the reaches of that river caused the fur trade to sink into insignificance. In 1867 the United States military forces established a garrison there, including a hospital, residence for officers and men, bakery, storehouses, stables and other buildings. All this property, when the post was abandoned three years later, was sold to a local trader and sutler for six hundred dollars, — an excellent illustration of the general carelessness with which affairs in Alaska were managed. Twenty years later, after a considerable period of litigation, the property was restored to the Government, the original sale having been declared illegal. The purchaser received back his six hundred dollars with compound interest.

Since then Wrangel has had its ups and downs. Houses were in demand and trade was good during the temporary excitement of the gold quest in the Cassiar district; then when the mines up the Stikine were abandoned, it again relapsed into stagnation. Even the forest of totem-

poles that designated the native village was stripped; as late as 1893 only half a dozen remained. The town itself has been almost destroyed by fire in recent years and there are comparatively few remains of the ancient days.

The curious visitor is taken to see the grave of the historic old chief, Shakes, who was for nearly half a century the terror of the coast. He opposed the missionaries, and furnished the natives with the intoxicating *huchinu*, or native rum, distilled from molasses and flour. When he died there were great ceremonies. His body was exposed in all his trappings. His treasures of carven chests, of blankets and of furs were piled high. An enormous stuffed grizzly — the emblem of his glorious line — with copper claws and wagging jaws was made to take part in a theatrical representation depicting the ancient days when Shakes's ancestors, at the time of the flood, took a bear into their canoe and saved him from drowning and were rewarded by the reciprocal generosity of the bear, who, when the canoe grounded, brought his rescuers food. Over Shakes's grave, when at last he was laid to rest, a bear was put on guard.

The climate of Wrangel is eminently favorable for market gardening. Mrs. Scidmore is authority for the statement that cabbages and mangel-wurzel reach prodigious size; cauliflowers are produced measuring eighteen inches around; and peas, beans, lettuce, celery, rhubarb and radishes thrive. Wild timothy grows six feet high in old clearings, and clover heads are twice the size of eastern clover, each blossom widespread, as red and fragrant as a carnation pink.

Wrangel is situated near the mouth of the Stikine River, the third largest river of the Alaskan coast, which was reached but not discovered by Vancouver's men. It was first reported by two American ship captains in 1799. Its head waters were first discovered in 1838 by a Scotch employee of the Hudson Bay Company, who, in crossing the mountains, came upon a foaming torrent and followed it down until he fell in with a large camp of Indians engaged in catching salmon and trading with the famous chief Shakes. From them he learned that



the name of the river was Stikine. It should properly be Sta Kina, which is said to mean great river. From Wrangel to Glenora, the head of navigation, the distance is about one hundred and fifty miles. Forty years later John Muir traversed its whole length and counted not less than a hundred glaciers that drained directly into the river. The grand cañon of the Stikine he declared to be a Yosemite a hundred miles long.

Forty miles above Wrangel and easily reached is the Great or Orlebar Glacier, which descends through a narrow gorge and spreads out in a semicircle measuring about three miles from edge to edge. Across the river, near the wonderful hot springs, is a smaller glacier, which, according to an Indian tradition, was once united with the Great Glacier, the river disappearing into an ice tunnel. They sent two of their old men into it in a canoe. Would they ever appear again? Yes, they returned and reported that there was a clear passage to the sea. In the little cañon the river narrows to less than a hundred feet, and the current, especially when there are floods, is almost invincible, as the early argonauts discovered to their sorrow. On the upper reaches of the river the great cañon extends for fifty miles through a rocky gorge traversible only in winter when there is a solid floor of snow and ice.

The yield of the placers of the Cassiar gold region at the head waters of the Stikine is estimated to have amounted to nearly five million dollars between 1874 and 1887, when its annual output fell from a million to a little more than sixty thousand dollars. The larger part of the river flows through the Dominion territory and the boundary for years gave rise to misunderstandings.

From Wrangel one can sail straight out into the Pacific by the Sumner Strait, which is about eighty miles long. Formerly ships proceeding north had to make this wide détour, passing through Chatham Strait and Frederick Sound, but skilful captains now pilot their course through Wrangel Narrows. This strait is nineteen miles long and in places not three hundred feet wide. Vancouver's explorers entered it, but thinking it merely an inlet turned back. It was first traversed

by the United States Steamer *Saginaw* in 1869. Fifteen years later Captain J. B. Coghlan established the route and it has now been charted. It is regarded as one of the great show trips of Alaska. The shores of the islands between which it runs are densely wooded, the trees thickly hung with the pale green Northern moss. There are glimpses of lofty mountains. The intensely green water is alive with floating fronds of orange yellow kelp. Here is the haunt of numberless eagles. The tides, here confined by narrow channels, rise often to a height of more than twenty feet and those from the north and south meet in the narrows near what is called Finger Point, and the battle of the waters is most dangerous and exciting. All tourists are enthusiastic over the beauty of sunsets and sunrises in this enchanting region. Mrs. Scidmore says: "The sunset effects in the broad channels at either end are renowned, and the possessor of a Claude Lorraine glass is the most fortunate of tourists. He who has seen the sunrise lights in the narrows has seen the best of the marvellous atmospheric and color displays the matchless coast can offer."

Mrs. Ella Higginson testifies to the same: "Sunrise and sunset effects in this narrow channel are justly famed. I once saw a mist blown ahead of my steamer at sunset, that, in the vivid brilliancy of its mingled scarlets, greens and purples, rivalled the coloring of a humming bird. At dawn long rays of delicate pink, beryl and pearl play through this green avenue, deepening in color, fading and withdrawing like Northern Lights. When the scene is silvered and softened by moonlight one looks for elves and fairies in the shadows of the moss-dripping spruce trees. The silence is so intense and the channel so narrow that frequently at dawn wild birds on the shores are heard saluting the sun with song; and never, under any circumstances, has bird song seemed so nearly divine, so golden with magic and message, as when thrilled through the fragrant green stillness of Wrangel Narrows at such an hour."

Prince Frederick Sound, into which the steamer emerges, was so named from having been the meeting place of two of Vancouver's lieu-

tenants on the birthday of the Duke of York in 1794. They landed on Kupreanof Island and there decided that the search for the passage from the Pacific into the Atlantic was mythical, all the stories of previous navigators to the contrary. Mrs. Scidmore says: "With no small portion of facetious mirth they remembered that they had sailed from England on the first day of April to find the Northwest Passage. These lieutenants made plain to their chief the 'uncommonly awful' and 'horribly magnificent' character of the scenery along the Prince Frederick shore, and Vancouver began the lavish use of adjectives which is in vogue in Alaskan narrative to-day."

This refers to a passage in which Lieutenant Whidbey, describing the mountains to the south that "rose to a prodigious height," said: "A part of them presented an uncommonly awful appearance, rising with an inclination toward the water to a vast height, loaded with an immense quantity of ice and snow, and overhanging their base, which seemed to be insufficient to bear the ponderous fabric it sustained, and rendered the view of the passage beneath horribly magnificent."

As the vessel approaches the sound the eye is attracted by a dark spire-shaped peak which rises nearly two thousand feet from the rim of a mountain amphitheater on the mainland. It has been called the Devil's Thumb with that generosity toward the Powers of Darkness which scatters testimonials to their presence all along the coasts of the world. The mountains rise to a height of seven thousand feet and as one sails to the north crossing the sound, the first coast glaciers are encountered. Patterson glacier pours down over a long slope and contributes a fine waterfall. In Vancouver's time it approached near enough to the shore for icebergs to tumble off into the water. He describes the weird effect of the thunderous crash heard at a distance of several miles.

This phenomenon is first observed at the present time at the inlet poetically named by the Indians Hutli or Thunder Bay, but, with fatal banality, Le Conte Bay and Glacier Bay, by the Coast Survey. The clear blue ice which comes gliding and sliding down through a steep

cañon forested to its very edge is about half a mile wide, and the enormous cakes of cleavage breaking off fall crashing into the water, causing the superstitious natives to believe that the bay was the home of the thunder-birds, whose flapping pinions caused the echoes to roll from the cliffs.

The finest views of the glaciers are obtained from Thomas Bay and the most noticeable feature of the sound is Cape Fanshaw, fronting the southwest and exposed to the fierce winds that sweep that region.

Beyond lies Mount Windham, which is twenty-five hundred feet high and looks down upon the exhausted gold fields of the seventies. The meadows on the shoulders of the high hills here are famous for their display of beautiful flowers — dwarf laurel, violets, daisies, anemones and the black Kamchatka lily. When they were explored by John Muir in 1879 they were the haunt of the mountain goat and mountain sheep.

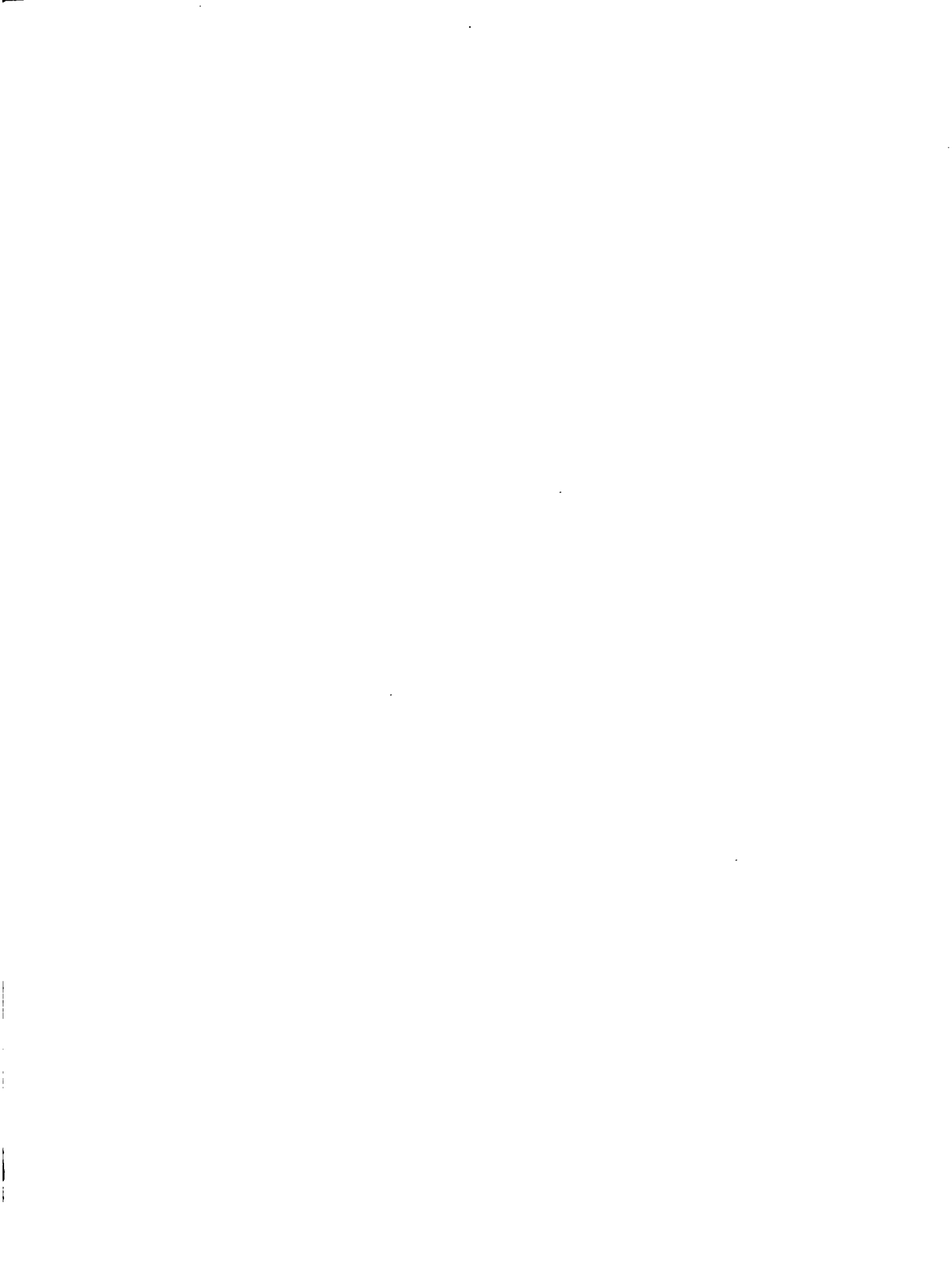
In the vicinity of Sumdum Bay is the mining town of the same name. The Indian word is said to represent or express the thunder of the falling ice. There is a fine glacier sliding down from the mountains beyond. The bay divides into two arms, each marked by glaciers, and aggregating a length of nearly fifty miles. It is a deep marine cañon, soundings having reached two hundred fathoms. Captain White of the U. S. S. ship *Wayanda* steered his gig into the arched grotto of one of those glaciers and penetrated more than a hundred feet “down a crystalline corridor” of marvellous colors. His crew poured out libations to the ice-spirits, the Sitt tu yekh, whose chill breath is death and who resent interference with his subjects, the icebergs. The sapphire eyed divinity accepted the libations graciously; had he been angry he would have ruthlessly shaken down the crystalline arch and overwhelmed the audacious mortals.

Muir regarded Sumdum Bay as the most interesting of all the Alaskan fjords. He says: “A hundred or more glaciers of the second and third class may be seen along the walls, and about as many snow

cataracts, which, with the plunging bergs, keep all the fjord in a roar. The scenery in both the long arms of the bay and their side branches is of the wildest description, especially in the upper reaches, where the granite walls, streaked with waterfalls, rise in sheer massive precipices, like those of Yosemite Valley, to a height of three thousand and even over four thousand feet."

The great Admiralty Island, one of the largest of the group, lies to the west of Stephens Passage. Like all the rest it is deeply indented with inlets, many of which are deep and characterized by swift and dangerous tidal currents. There are mountains that rise to a height of three and four thousand feet. The cliffs along the coast are rugged and wild. In the interior, which has not as yet been thoroughly explored, are many lakes. Gold abounds and there are mines of coal and quarries of fine marble. The timber, especially the yellow cedar, is among the best in Alaska. For many years this region was the centre of the whaling industry, and was the haunt of the most blood-thirsty of the native tribes. The annals are full of exciting tales of their incursions along the coast. Thus in 1857 a party of about a thousand sailed on to Puget Sound, shot Colonel Eby, the Collector of Customs, on Whidbey Island, and several other men, mounted their heads on poles and paddled away in triumph. They were emboldened by their impunity and a few years later they seized and scuttled the schooner *Royal Charlie*, and murdered the crew. A Sitka sentry shot one of them in 1869 and in revenge they killed two Sitka traders. Then the *Saginaw* appeared and destroyed three of their villages on the upper end of the island of Kupreanof.

In 1880 the Northwest Trading Company established a whaling station at Killionu, at the entrance of the remarkable Kutznuhu Inlet. A bomb harpoon exploded in 1882 and killed a great shaman or medicine man. The Kutznuhus demanded an indemnity of two hundred blankets. When it was refused they captured a white man as ransom. He proved to be blind in one eye and was returned with a message that they would exterminate the whites at the settlement unless their de-





NATIVE ALASKAN IVORY WORKER.

mand was satisfied. Word was sent to Captain Merriman at Sitka; he took the revenue cutter and bombarded the Indian village of Angun. Mrs. Scidmore relating the occurrence says: "Much indignation was vented by eastern editors at the occurrence, and sad pictures were drawn of the natives left shelterless among 'the eternal ice and snow of an arctic winter.' The mercury stood twenty degrees higher for the month than in New York and Boston and the Kootznahoos, securing front seats on the opposite shore, watched the bombardment and cheered the nearest shots. The tribe saved their winter provisions and all their belongings save what pilferers took during the bombardment. They paid a fine of four hundred blankets and have since kept the peace."

Their Chief Kitchnatti, known to tourists as Saginaw Jake, because of his year's imprisonment on the steamship as a ransom, used to swell around in a gay uniform and announce his greatness by a doggerel placard placed over his log cabin at Killionu.

These Indians are now insignificant in numbers.

Another much dreaded tribe of natives were the Takus, whose name is commemorated in a mountain two thousand feet high, symmetrical in shape and densely wooded, and also in an inlet and a glacier. The Takus have been called "the Alaska Jews," so keen and mercenary were they. They drove away the garrison from the Hudson Bay Company's Fort Durham and looted more than one of their fur ships.

The Taku Inlet extends for about eighteen miles and ends in a magnificent glacier called by the natives Sith Klunu Gutta, "the Spirits' home." The natives believed that the monstrous man-faced seals dwelt in its crystal grottoes. The ice-stream is about a mile wide and rises several hundred feet above the water. The ice is of remarkable purity and serves to supply the refrigerators of visiting ships. Mrs. Higginson describes it with her usual brilliancy of impressionistic coloring:

"The splendid front drops down sheer to the water, from a height of probably three hundred feet.



“ A sapphire mist drifts over it, without obscuring the exquisite tints of rose, azure, purple and green that flash out from the glistening spires and columns. The crumpled mass pushing down from the mountains strains against the front and sends towered bulks plunging headlong into the sea, with a roar that echoes from peak to peak in a kind of ‘ linked sweetness long drawn out ’ and ever diminishing.”

The report of a cannon or the vibration of a steamer’s whistle will dislodge enormous masses of the disintegrating ice, making the passage into the bay almost impossible for large vessels and dangerous for small ones.

Mrs. Higginson cannot forgive early discoverer Whidbey’s insular blindness to beauty. “ He found ‘ a compact body of ice extending some distance nearly all around.’ He found ‘ frozen mountains,’ ‘ rock sides,’ ‘ dwarf pine trees ’ and ‘ undissolving frost and snow.’ He lamented the lack of a suitable landing place for boats, and reported the aspect in general to be ‘ as dreary and inhospitable as the imagination can possibly suggest.’ Alas for the poor chilly Englishman,” continues his critic, “ he doubtless expected silvery-gowned ice maidens to come sliding out from under the glacier in pearly boats, to bear him back into their deep blue grottoes and dells of ice, and refresh him with Russian tea from old brass samovars; he expected these maidens to be girdled and crowned with carnations and poppies, and to pluck winy grapes — with *dust* clinging to their bloomy roundness — from living vines for him to eat; and most of all he expected to find in some remote corner of the clear and sparkling cavern a big fireplace, ‘ which would remind him pleasantly of England,’ and a brilliant fire on a well-swept hearth, with the smoke and sparks going up through a melted hole in the glacier.”

The Taku River has been navigated with canoes for sixty miles and from its head waters there is comparatively easy communication with affluents of the Yukon. But the valley swarms with mosquitoes.

The open space where Stephens Passage and Taku Inlet resolve into the long Gastineau Channel bears an evil name among sailors. “ In

winter," says Mrs. Scidmore, "fierce *willawaws* or 'woolies' sweep from the heights, beat the water to foam, and drive the spray in dense, blinding sheets, but in summer it smiles and ripples in perfect peace, sparkles with little icebergs, and is a point of magnificent views." Mrs. Higginson evidently had the same experience with this place. She says:

"The stretch of water where Stephens Passage, Taku Inlet, Gastineau Channel, and the southeastern arm of Lynn Canal converge is in winter dreaded by pilots. A squall is liable to come tearing down Taku Inlet at any moment and meet one from some other direction, to the peril of navigation. At times a kind of fine frozen mist is driven across by the violent gales, making it difficult to see a ship's length ahead. At such times the expressive faces on the bridge of a steamer are psychological studies.

"In summer, however, no open stretch of water could be more inviting. Clear, faintly rippled, deep sapphire, flecked with the first glittering bergs floating out of the inlet, it leads the way to the glorious presence that lies beyond."

## CHAPTER XII.

### JUNEAU AND SKAGUAY.

**J**UNEAU, the present capital of Alaska, is situated on the mainland, about ten miles above the entrance to Gastineau Channel. It is flanked by Mount Juneau rising sheer to a height of three thousand feet and glittering with patches of snow and airy waterfalls. The wharves line the beach; numbered avenues run parallel on terraces, while extremely steep streets, intersecting, climb toward the top of "Chicken Ridge." Greely declares that there is not within the limits of the town a naturally level spot a hundred feet square. The court house stands out on the top of the hill. There are a number of churches, a hospital, an "opera house," and of course a rivalry of women's clubs. Two daily papers having the benefit of reduced telegraph rates keep the inhabitants in touch with the great world. The water supply is abundant and good; the streets are brilliantly lighted with electricity.

Contrary to general belief the winter climate of Juneau is far milder than that of Boston. The mercury never goes much below zero. The average for January is about twenty-seven degrees and for February about twenty-five degrees. The precipitation is generally in the form of rain near the level of the sea. The mountains which rise to a height of not more than a mile are densely wooded for two-thirds of that elevation. Almost all the vegetables of the Temperate Zone grow abundantly in the vicinity of Juneau. Noticeable are "vine-clad or flower-embowered cottages reached by gray mossed stairways." The population of the town of Juneau varies from two to three thousand, being increased in winter by the influx of miners from the colder interior.

General Greely says that in his ten visits to the town he has experienced no importunity by beggars or any affront from the mythical border ruffian, or witnessed any offensive drunken scenes or street disorders. "In short," he says, "Juneau is a well-governed, intelligent, thriving, self-respecting town."

Mrs. Higginson describes her first visit there:

"The unique situation of Juneau appeals powerfully to the lover of beauty. There is an unforgettable charm in its narrow crooked streets and winding mossed stairways; its picturesque shops — some with gorgeous totem-poles for signs — where a small fortune may be spent on a single Attu or Atka basket; the glitter and the music of its streets and its 'places,' the latter open all night; its people standing in doorways and open corners, eager to talk to strangers and bid them welcome; and its gayly clad squaws, surrounded by fine baskets and other work of their brown hands. In the heart of the town is an old Presbyterian Mission church, built of logs, with an artistic square tower, also of logs, at one corner. This church is now used as a brewery and soda-bottling establishment."

After the discovery made by Richard Harris and Joseph Juneau in October, 1880, there was a stampede to the Taku region. Many spent the winter at Miner's Cove so as to be on hand when spring broke. During the first year a guard of United States Marines preserved order, but when it was withdrawn a reign of lawlessness ensued. The miners themselves instituted a vigilance committee, but the Government afforded no protection and refused even to pass any land laws. Even when they were passed the absurd regulation that all claims must be rectangular and drawn north and south made them impossible of application. The new settlement was first called Pilsbury, after the first assayer who arrived; then Fliptown by jocular miners; then Rockwell after the commander of Jamestown; then Harrisburg, and, at the meeting when in May, 1882, finally the name Juneau was adopted all the Chinese were driven from the camp. Four years later anti-Chinese riots resulted in grievous wrongs to the long-cued Celestials.

The Chinese cabins were dynamited and the Chinese were all forcibly put aboard a schooner and set adrift without any provisions.

About five miles across the channel from Juneau on Douglas Island, which is twenty-five miles long and from five to eight miles wide, lie the famous Treadwell mines, which are regarded as the second largest in the world. The quartz has been excavated to a depth of one thousand feet and the tunnels run under the channel. The eight or nine hundred stamps drop continuously day and night with only two days of rest — Christmas and the glorious Fourth. And the net profits from the ore, though it is of low grade, are said to be six thousand dollars a day. The original cost to John Treadwell was less than five hundred dollars. At first he was obliged to remain on his property and drive away the lawless squatters against whom he had no other protection than force. Millions were spent on machinery and equipment; no expense has ever been spared for improvements and it is said that the treatment of the miners has been equitable and even generous. There are two towns aggregating three thousand inhabitants — Treadwell, where the miners live, and Douglas, mainly devoted to trading interests. They stretch along the channel for a mile or more and are brilliantly lighted and provided with all the advantages of civilization.

From Juneau to Skaguay is one of the most fascinating trips in Southern Alaska. The ship retraces its course as far as the southern end of Douglas Island and passes into Lynn Canal or Channel, which is a continuation of Chatham Strait separating Admiralty from Chicago Islands, and making altogether a royal waterway averaging five miles in width for nearly two hundred miles. Before the Russians permitted their policy of extermination these waters were the haunts of countless sea-otters. Now they are rarely seen.

The Lynn Canal, which was named by Vancouver from his native town in Norfolk, is called the noblest and most majestic of the slender waterways of Alaska. It has been sounded to a depth of more than twenty-five hundred feet, and it is bounded by mountains rising more

than a mile in height on both sides. Snow covered peaks and domes form a continuous panorama and the colors are gorgeous, especially at sunset, when the snows become rose, and the reaches grow purple and orange. Even the prosaic Vancouver's still more prosaic officer, Whidbey, had to speak of this fjord as "bounded by lofty, stupendous mountains, . . . forever doomed to support a burthen of undissolving ice and snow." The undissolving ice and snow caused by the tremendous precipitation fill the valleys and form the wonderful glaciers which line the canal. One discovered by the then Captain L. A. Beardsley in 1879 "is surmounted by a rocky crag, which resembles our national bird so much more than does the figure on the new dollar that we christened it the Eagle Glacier."

At Seduction Point the canal divides into two channels, Chilkat Inlet on the west and Chilkoot on the east. The point was so named by Vancouver because after Whidbey had explored the two inlets and discovered the Chilkat River, he was met by several canoe-loads of natives "of exceedingly artful character" led by a very dignified chief dressed in robes of state—the narkhin or native blanket—a blanket variegated with several colors and ornamented with little parti-colored tufts, a headdress made of wood resembling a crown and adorned with copper spangles attached to wool and fur streamers, each terminating in an ermine skin. He was suspicious of them and his suspicions seem to have been justified, but he escaped their treachery and withdrew to Point Retreat on the northern end of Admiralty Island.

At the head of Chilkat Inlet, on Pyramid Harbor, is a cannery which exploits the multitudinous salmon which run up the river. Back of it is Mount Labouchère which rises almost perpendicularly to a height of nearly two thousand feet. The woods with which it is crowned are infested with bears. Summer visitors here usually find a camp of Chilkat Indians who sell blankets, baskets, spoons and curios, as well as wonderful bouquets of wild roses. The Chilkat blankets are among the most famous of all Indian manufactures. They were formerly dyed

black, yellow and blue or red with a black border and of permanent colors, but the demand for them has induced their weavers to use trader's yarns in aniline dyes. They were woven of the finely spun wool of the mountain goat on a warp of fine cedar threads. Suspended from an upright loom the symbolism of the native heraldry is often perpetuated in their ornamentation: the full face with wide nostrils, tiny eyes and savage teeth represents the bear; the claws and inverted eye stand for the presence of the thunder-bird.

The Chilkats and Chilkoots, two branches of the great ethnographic division of the Alaska Indians called Tlingits or Thlinkits, a word meaning men, controlled the passes into the Yukon region. No members of other tribes dared cross their domain and for many years they were ready to attack any white prospectors or explorers. All the clans of this great tribe had similar customs and beliefs. They were like the primitive Scots in their heraldry. Each clan had its own totem or symbol, generally representing some bird, fish or animal. The two great divisions were the Raven Clan, including the Frog, the Goose, the Sea Lion, the Owl and the Salmon, who claimed to be descended from Yeshl, the great Creator, whose dwelling-place is where the East wind begins to blow; and the Wolf Clan, descended from Khenukh, guardian of the sacred well, and including the Bear, the Eagle, the Porpoise, the Shark and others. At dances and great ceremonies the people would frequently dress up to represent the clan totem; and easily recognized parts of it—a wing, or a tooth, or an eye—would be painted on canvas or shields or woven into blankets and baskets.

Men could not marry into their own clan and when they procured wives from a different clan the symbol of the new connection was transferred to the heraldic totem-pole, which thus became, as it were, a family-tree. The unfortunate persuasions of the early missionaries which led many of the converts to destroy their wonderfully carved and colored poles can not be sufficiently regretted. Thousands of them have disappeared. The Harriman expedition visited several deserted

villages along the coast where the poles were still standing — mute witnesses of a perished people.

The great Russian missionary, Veniaminof, made many interesting observations on their habits and customs. Their favorite medium of exchange was blankets, and they were sufficiently mercenary to be satisfied for any injury, even for a mortal one, with a payment in that commodity. This was not always reasonably reckoned. Thus it is said that when a Sitkan Thlinkit broke into the cabin of a white man and drank himself to death, his clan demanded and received compensation as if they had been to blame. On another occasion a trading schooner rescued two Thlinkit fishermen from a sinking canoe. The owners themselves cut the craft adrift, but when the humane captain went out of his way to land the two men at their village, the inhabitants demanded payment for the lost canoe and threatened summary vengeance if it were not instantly paid.

In the olden days these tribes made themselves as hideous as possible, especially when about to go into battle. Both men and women painted their faces black with soot and red with cinnabar, afterwards scratching horrible designs on them with wooden sticks. They wore silver rings or even feathers or other objects in the nose, the septum being pierced in childhood for this purpose. The women wore a huge labret in the lower lip. On reaching marriageable age the lip was pierced and a small round piece of bone or silver was inserted. This hole was enlarged gradually, in some cases the ornament being two inches in diameter, making the lip protrude and rendering it impossible to close. The old chieftainess who attacked Vancouver so fiercely was conspicuous by reason of this disgusting deformity. They also pierced their ears to commemorate some great exploit. Their war canoes were frequently carved out from a single log large enough to carry forty or fifty men, and were ornamented at bow and stern with gayly colored barbaric carvings, as were also the paddles and oars. They had the art of forging copper and they even carved jade. Ethnologists have traced a connection between the language of the Thlin-



kits and the Apaches as well as of the Aztecs. It is possible that the earliest immigrants came from Asia and descended toward the south. Their own legends indicate a contrary arrival.

Confined to a narrow belt of coast the Thlinkits were great fishermen and hunters of sea-creatures. From superstition they refrained from killing birds and they did not like to interfere with bears, having been imbued by their shamans, or medicine men, with the notion that bears are human beings in animal shape. Their treatment of newborn children and of women just delivered was cruel in the extreme; it was a wonder that any survived. They burned their dead and accompanied the ceremony with curious actions, sometimes the relatives putting their heads in the flames and burning off all the hair, or otherwise torturing their flesh. After the cremation the relatives indulged in a regular wake for four nights in succession, howling themselves hoarse. Sometimes if the deceased was wealthy a slave or two would be killed to give him service in another world. At the end of the period of mourning gifts were distributed and all present indulged in a feast. The heir was a sister's son, and he was compelled to marry the widow.

This giving of presents is called potlatch, and is often so extravagant as to ruin those giving them. The ceremony is thus described by Paul S. Luttrell: "The most prolific source of potlatching is the erection of new houses. The location for the new building is selected at a 'smoking council' of the tribe, after which the erection is commenced, the owner being assisted by such members of his tribe as are experts. As it draws near completion another council is held, at which is decided the date of the potlatch. The whole tribe is notified and each member is expected to contribute something toward the potlatch and the subsequent feast. On the eventful morning all assemble at the new house, each in his best, with the exposed portion of their bodies covered with paint and further embellished with wads of cotton pasted at irregular intervals on the face and in the hair. The festivities commence with a dance, the women executing a species of side-shuffle, while the men

augment the enthusiasm by stamping their feet. Everybody sings. When the song and dancing are finished, some one hands up a bolt of calico, or some blankets, handkerchiefs, soap, or what not, at the same time mentioning the name of the person or persons to whom the donor desires the present to be given. (It is well to mention parenthetically, that the potlatch presents and feast are given to members of opposite tribes.) The present, whatever it may be, is divided or torn into as many portions as donees, and then presented, after which more singing and more presents, until everything is given away. This may last twenty-four or forty-eight hours, the women during this time never leaving the house, and eating nothing save an occasional cracker, which may have been presented to them, moistening their throats as they become dry with the juice of tobacco, made moist in a can of water.

“After the potlatch comes the feast. Rice has been cooked and seasoned with molasses and seal oil; boxes of sugar and biscuits are opened, and an abundance of the omnipresent seal grease provided. Every available receptacle, from a washtub to an old tin can, is used for passing around the food, and everybody eats until their stomachs rebel, go outside, relieve themselves by vomiting, and return to the attack, until all has been consumed. They know no such thing as an intermediate point. The potlatch and subsequent feast must exceed the cost of the simple structure in honor of which it is given many times.”

The Thlinkit mythology is largely concerned with the adventures of Yeshl, who was able to fly in the skin of the long-billed kutzgatushl or crane. When his jealous uncle tried to kill him as he had killed all of his other nephews by upsetting them from a canoe, Yeshl walked along the sea-bottom and escaped. Then the wicked uncle, who seems to correspond to Saturn in Greek mythology, sent a great flood. Yeshl put on his crane skin and flew up into the skies until the flood subsided. His manner of giving mankind light is thus described:

A rich and powerful chief had the sun, moon and stars concealed in three strong boxes. He also had a daughter whom he loved and pam-

pered but guarded with extraordinary care. Yeshl discovered that the only way to obtain possession of the treasures of light was to be born as the chief's grandson. He transformed himself into a blade of grass and when the beautiful maiden drank from her bowl he slipped down her throat, and in due time was born as a tiny infant. Her father took a great fancy to this mysterious grandson and there was nothing that he would not give to him. Once upon a time he began to cry and could not be quieted. He managed to signify that what he wanted was in the three sacred boxes. The grandfather to pacify him let him have one of them. He dragged it out of doors, opened the lid, and lo, the stars were shining in heaven! The ruse worked similarly well in regard to the moon, but when he tried to obtain the third box containing the sun the grandfather was inexorable. But when the boy refused to be comforted he let him play with it on the condition that he should not open the lid. As soon as he got it outside he transformed himself into a great raven and flew away with the box. As he flew he heard voices but could not see the people because the sun was still in the box. When at last he opened it, the inhabitants of the earth were frightened at the dazzling brilliancy and hid themselves and were changed into fishes, bears and other animals according to their hiding-place. But the Thlinkits were still without fire; it was only to be found on an island far out at sea. This Indian Prometheus flew thither, picked up a burning brand and hurried back with it; but the distance was so great that when he got back the brand was almost consumed and even his bill was scorched. Consequently he dropped the glowing coal and the sparks were scattered over the whole shore; that is why both wood and stone contain fire.

He also procured fresh water for his people from the sacred well guarded by Khenukh, the ancestor of the Wolf clan. Yeshl managed to gather up some in his bill and when he flew back wherever he dropped a drop of water spread lakes and ponds and rivers and brooks. Khenukh was represented as stronger even than Yeshl, though not so shrewd, as was proved by the larceny of the water. When he had

accomplished all he felt was necessary for his people Yeshl disappeared and went to his home in the far east.

The Thlinkits have many other gods and spirits, and the phenomena of nature — the Northern lights and comets and meteors — have their superstitious explanations, as interpreted by the shamans. They have also a legend of the flood where a great ship stranded on a submerged log and broke in two; those remaining in one half being Thlinkit and the others drifting away becoming the people of other nations.

One of the last of the native chiefs was named Klo Kutz, a man of determined character and strong will. His people believed that he bore a charmed life. He was friendly to the new comers and when Professor George Davidson went to the head of Lynn Canal in 1869 to observe the eclipse of the sun he entertained his party and rendered him great assistance. The natives, who had not believed the professor's prediction, were terribly alarmed when it came true. They came to the conclusion that he was a wizard and ran away from him as fast as they could go. Unfortunately, contact with immoral white men and drunkenness and disease has brought about the decadence of this tribe which was recognized by early visitors as among the finest of all Indians. In less than forty years they have been reduced from thousands to hundreds. Pneumonia, the grip and measles have always been peculiarly fatal to savages.

Skagway, or more properly Skaguay, said to mean "the Home of the North Wind," is the terminus of the Inside Passage and, like the other large Alaskan towns, excepting Nome, challenges admiration for its beauty of situation. It is surrounded by an amphitheater of lofty mountains. It is reached by Taiya Inlet, another of the marvellous mountain-guarded waterways, offering continually changing views of snowy peaks, glittering glaciers, and numberless cascades. Skaguay lies at the mouth of the Skaguay River, which after its swift descent from the highlands flows winding through meadowlike flats and empties into the inlet. The present permanent population of the town is

upwards of a thousand, dwelling in comfortable houses lighted with electricity and surrounded with rival flower gardens.

General Greely speaking of Skaguay, "the best-known town of Alaska," says: "It will live in history as the base of operations for thousands of adventurous prospectors during the Klondike excitement of 1897-1898. Skaguay is a pleasant base for excursions for the lover of the picturesque, the admirer of scenery, the student of natural history or ethnographical subjects. Reasonably near are the Chilkat and Chilkoot villages, with their native hats, baskets, and blankets. Over the White Pass, by rail, through scenery of beauty and grandeur, and along the way once marked by scenes of human misery and courage, one reached in a few hours the lake sources of the Yukon. Near by are also the glaciers of Davidson, Mendenhall, and others, which will richly repay a visit. Along the foaming rapids of the Skaguay River, with its flowery banks, or up the winding paths to the mountain forests, the flowery glades, and sylvan lakes, there is surprise upon surprise at the delights and beauties that hourly break in on one, while wandering in the delicious summer weather of the Alaskan wonderland."

Only ten or twelve years ago, during the great Klondike excitement, it was a city of tents. From here the trail ran through to the mining regions of the upper Yukon and the Klondike. In the grim story of the Greed for Gold the chapter devoted to the founding of Skaguay is perhaps the fullest of exciting incidents and many a paragraph would have to be devoted to the depredation of "Soapy" Smith and his band of outlaws who murdered and robbed the unfortunate prospector who had been spotted in advance.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE MIGHTY YUKON.

**S**KAGUAY is the terminus of the White Pass and Yukon Railway, which was begun in May, 1898, and finished in January, 1900.

The possibilities of the route were foreseen by M. J. Heney, but he could not interest American capital, so he went to England and there succeeded in raising the money needed. The first twenty miles from Skaguay, constructed over tremendous precipices, so steep that men working had to be suspended from above on ropes, and blasting away colossal cliffs, cost an average of one hundred thousand dollars a mile. All the materials had to be brought from Seattle at enormous expense. Thirty-five hundred men were employed in its construction, and in spite of the rigors of the mountain climate only thirty died from accident or disease. At one time, however, the report of the rich gold-strike having arrived, fifteen hundred of the men drew their pay and deserted. In the one hundred and eleven miles to White Horse the road passes through only one tunnel, although it climbs to such giddy heights above the valley that the trees along the foaming stream look like bushes. There is a steel cantilever bridge which is two hundred and fifteen feet high. Twenty miles up from Skaguay is the summit of the pass and here the Canadian and American boundaries meet with all the attendant annoyances of customs inspection. The little pond that flashes sapphire near the station, perhaps four thousand feet above the sea, is regarded as one of the sources of the mighty Yukon. The train passes several of these storage lakes; first, Lake Lindemann, which is seven miles long and half a mile wide, connected by a brawling stream three-quarters of a mile long and perhaps a hundred feet wide, with Lake Bennett, which is twenty-seven miles long, though not more

than two miles wide, and the mountains across are nearly, if not quite, a mile high. They are of almost solid iron and give a peculiar rose color to the distance.

At Caribou Crossing one is told great stories of the days when droves of thousands of caribou passed here on their way to their feeding-ground through the hills and valleys of the Stewart, Klondike, and other rivers. The herd has been known to take ninety days at the rate of a thousand a day, sometimes even more, so that their track was five miles in width. Packs of wolves hung on their skirts and quickly despatched such as were lamed or weak. In many cases they proved the salvation of half-starving miners. The Crossing is now a lonely, desolate hamlet, where in the old days there must have been more activity than now, though there is some traffic by boat with the Atlin mining district which is reached by a chain of beautiful lakes set like jewels in the mountains. The saw-mill at the head of Lake Bennett used to furnish boards for this river traffic at the rate of one hundred dollars a thousand feet.

The traveller has a chance during the trip to see the great cañon which was one of the passages most dreaded by the early Klondike gold-questers. The sides are perpendicular walls of dark basalt, rising one or two hundred feet, and crowned with sombre spruces that climb the mountain's sides. In five-eighths of a mile the river drops thirty feet, rushing at the rate of fifteen miles an hour between huge gray boulders which dash the foam in huge sheets and whirlpools.

Before reaching White Horse, rapids no less dangerous and treacherous are also exhibited to the admiring tourist.

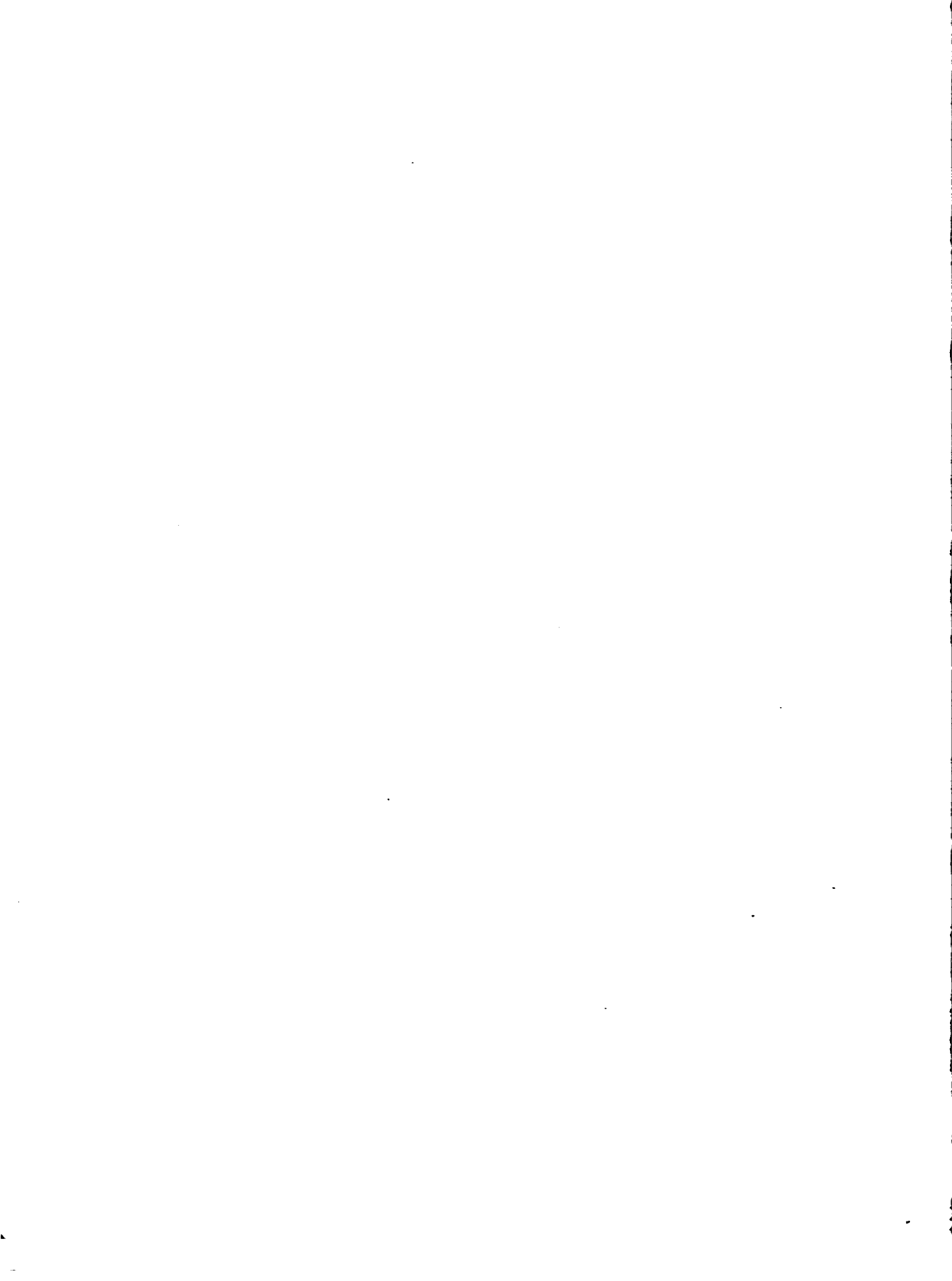
All along the railway there are pleasant and successful looking settlements where immigrants have started homes supported by hunting, fishing and farming. The summer, though short, allows the growth of many vegetables and a marvellous growth of rich and succulent grass.

White Horse is a new town, built principally of wood, housing fifteen hundred or more inhabitants, most of whom are prosperous, and



**NATIVE ALASKAN BOAT BUILDER.**





see to it that the town is kept in perfect order. In the vicinity are rich copper mines which the railway renders available.

Steamboats leave White Horse for Dawson three times a week in summer, the trip taking two days. The distance is three hundred and fifty miles. After river navigation is closed six-horse stages or four-horse sleighs make the trip in six days. As in all rivers, at least in their upper reaches, the channel shifts from side to side, and there are many changing sandbars where a boat is likely to go aground. The Lewes-Yukon flows through Lake Kluk-tassi or Lebarge, famous for its grayling and whitefish. This is thirty-two miles long and three and a half miles wide, with gray cliffs and columns of red rocks, adorned with a single island. The sweeping slopes are heavily wooded. Shortly after leaving the lake the banks of the river contract to less than five hundred feet and the stream pours swiftly among five huge columns of stone, giving the rapids its name of "the Five Fingers."

The Pelley River, rising in the Pelley Mountains, is joined at the old Hudson Bay station of Selkirk by the Lewes, which drains a number of lakes, both of them being frequently reinforced by affluents draining other valleys, and there form the Yukon, which, after flowing twenty-three hundred miles, empties into Bering Sea in the far and frozen north. Any one interested in Alaska should certainly read Schwatka's account of his famous descent of this, the fourth largest river on the continent. At Selkirk the great river cuts through the mountains and offers the most magnificent scenery for one hundred and fifty miles.

Dawson is the capital of the Yukon territory, and being the financial and social centre of the Klondike region has attained eminence as a city. It has enormous storehouses for the transportation companies; it has banks and clubs, churches and library, hospitals and newspapers; good water works, but as yet poor sewerage. The city extends for about a mile along the river and is built back to the hill. The streets are wide and well cared for. Frame or log houses prevail, the uncertainty of foundation on frozen soil being adverse either to brick or

plastered houses. Many of the roofs are covered with soil to a considerable depth and in summer these are gay with greenery or with brilliant flowers. A visitor in August is likely to be amazed at the display of vines and blooms, making the whole town seem like one great flower garden sloping up toward the hills. The public school-house cost fifty thousand dollars; the governor's mansion, which was built of British Columbia fir and most luxuriantly furnished, was destroyed by fire in 1907. The governor's private office is now in the great administration building which is situated in the midst of a small park. The place is rather strictly governed, order being maintained for the ten thousand inhabitants by the famous Northwest Mounted Police.

From Dawson one can make excursions, perhaps by automobile, to the Golconda which served to create this metropolis in the midst of the frozen wilderness. The rich placers along the little streams that helped to feed the upper Yukon, typified by the Klondike, or Tron-Dieuck, which has given its name to the whole district and almost eclipsed Alaska itself, were speedily exhausted and had not expensive systems of hydraulic mining been introduced by the syndicates and combined companies, Dawson would have been deserted like so many other mushroom towns.

George Carmack, with two Indian brothers of his wife, was one day in August, 1896, fishing at the mouth of the Klondike River. They struck Bonanza Creek, and on prospecting washed out twelve dollars from their first pan. They immediately staked claims. On the site of Dawson they built a raft and floated down the river to Forty Mile Creek to file their claim. The first year three hundred thousand dollars were taken out. The yield in 1900 had risen to twenty-two million two hundred and seventy-five thousand; since then it has been steadily diminishing.

The traveller with plenty of time may take steamship at Dawson for the great trip down the Yukon to its mouth. Forty-Mile, which should have borne its native name of Chetondeg, was the first mining

camp on the Yukon. It even boasted of an opera house, but the Klondike strike depopulated it. It has still some importance as the mining interests in the neighborhood are dependent on it for supplies. The source of the mighty Tanana River, the greatest tributary of the Yukon, having been navigated by steamboat for seven hundred miles, is not far away from the source of Forty-Mile. Fifty miles farther down the river, at the junction of the now famous Mission, is Eagle, the first town in Alaska proper. It has a population of several hundred people and is likely to grow in importance as soon as it is connected by railway, as it is now by telegraph, with Valdez, at the head of Prince William Sound. Companies of American soldiers are generally stationed at Fort Egbert and the presence of the officers and their wives gives the place a pleasant society. Although it is in the vicinity of the Arctic Circle, and more than three hundred miles from the coast, the inhabitants point with pride to their native vegetables, which attain great luxuriance by having the sun all day and all night during the short summer. Here one might if one pleased leave the steamship and return to the coast by the government trail, following the telegraph posts and crossing the wonderful Chugatch mountains.

Circle City, so named because of its proximity to the Arctic Circle, is hardly a city now, though before the Klondike days the discovery of gold on Birch Creek, a few miles away, attracted more than a thousand miners. The most northerly point on the Yukon is at Port Yukon, established by the Hudson Bay Company in 1847, first at the mouth of the Porcupine River, which is navigable for light draft steam-boats for one hundred miles. It used to take two years to reach this place from York Factory on Hudson Bay, four thousand miles to the east. It was formerly a great centre for the fur trade among the Indians, but as that trade diminished there was nothing to keep it alive and now what is of chief interest is the lonely graveyard, said to be the only one in the Arctic Circle.

The river below Dawson is often called the Upper Ramparts and here is the finest scenery in Alaska, the stream being half a mile wide

and flowing between lofty banks. Then for two hundred miles it winds through "the Flats," sometimes there dividing into several channels with sluggish current and offering great obstacles to the pilots from the shifting bars. It has been estimated that the islands thus formed are as many as ten thousand in number and many of these are covered with a dense growth of cottonwood, birch and spruce trees. The valley widens out into a comparatively level plain, in some places a hundred miles from escarpment to escarpment. Many travellers are wearied by the monotony, but others find a great charm in the wide spaces and the silence, the distant views of cloudlike mountains, occasional glimpses of Indian or Eskimo settlements as the steamship approaches the shore.

The third great division of the river is also called the Ramparts. Here it again contracts into a narrow swift current, in some places shooting down at an incline of more than twenty feet to the mile. The town of Rampart, founded by Captain Mayo in 1873, was formerly the headquarters of the Third Judicial District of Alaska; it has lost some of its importance but has a charm all its own. On the bluff runs the long winding street with log houses having the characteristic earth-and-flower covered roofs. It has a population of about four hundred and is the centre of trade for the Minook mining regions, which in 1906 produced three hundred and fifty thousand dollars, lying toward the south. On the other side of the river and half a mile away the Government maintains a successful agricultural station which has proved that grain can ripen there year after year, while potatoes, cabbages, peas and other vegetables thrive wonderfully. Though the winter temperature sometimes reaches seventy degrees below zero the climate is not so severe as in Minnesota because blizzards are unknown.

Within a day's sail of Rampart, down at the junction of the great River Tanana is the town of Tanana, sometimes called Weare. It is regarded as the most beautiful place on the Yukon, being situated on a high intervale with a magnificent view of wide spreading waters. Cities at the junction of great rivers have always a peculiarly inspiring charm. Tanana has wide streets and the log houses, all adorned with

summer blooms, are set far back embowered in lovely colors. Adjoining Tanana is Fort Gibson, established in 1900. It is garrisoned by two companies of United States Infantry and a company of the Signal Corps. It would be no exile for a man to be stationed there even in winter, for the long nights are made gay by all sorts of athletic sports and the summers are a dream of delight — a clear sparkling atmosphere perfumed with myriads of roses.

From Tanana one may make a side excursion up the Tanana River to the fine new town of Fairbanks, which is one of the largest centres of population in Alaska. In 1898 Mr. Alfred H. Brooks, one of the ablest attachés of the United States Geological Survey, predicted that gold would be found in the valley of this great river. Four years later Felix Pedro, following the indications, made the first discovery and by the autumn of the next year eight hundred men were staking claims in the various streams that are tributary to it. The district and principal camp were named Fairbanks, after the Vice President of the United States. By 1906 the output of gold had reached more than nine millions; its trade alone in 1907 had attained a volume of more than two millions, and that year a disastrous strike occurred. It was attended with great violence and put a temporary end to the prosperity of the place.

The town of Chena, although situated at the junction of the Chena and the Tanana, at the head of navigation for large steamships, has not kept pace with Fairbanks for the reason that it is eight or nine miles farther away from the gold-producing creeks.

The river is open generally for five months — from about the middle of May until the middle of October. From Chena one can go to Fairbanks by the Tanana Valley Railway; this also connects with the principal mines. A railway, possibly two, will soon connect it with the coast. Even now one can ride comfortably in summer, at least from Fairbanks to Valdez, in a little more than a week. That the railroad is needed is shown by the fact that over the forty-five miles already constructed as many as fifty thousand passengers are carried in

a single season, while the freight transported amounts to fifteen thousand tons at a present cost of fifty-eight cents a ton per mile. When the material for the railway was first brought — some of it from a distance of six thousand miles — the local freight rate was nearly six times as much.

Fairbanks is one of the marvels of the North. It is a well-built town with a permanent population of upwards of four thousand. The town is lighted by electricity, a central steam plant heats the business section and many private houses. An excellent telephone service extends not only throughout the city, but also into seven adjacent towns and even to the mines in the neighboring valleys. There is a full water supply, enabling the fire district to boast of fifteen or more streams at one hundred and forty pounds pressure. There are three banks, each maintaining an expert assayer. Opposite the city, on Garden Island, on the left bank of the river, and connected by two substantial bridges, are situated five large saw mills which exploit the native timber, which consists of poplar, spruce, hemlock and birch, rafted down from the upper reaches of the river. Here also are the foundries and the terminals of the railway.

There are twelve hotels, two daily papers, printed on cylinder presses, a weekly and a quarterly, two generously managed hospitals, and five churches, a large theater, clubs and other adjuncts to instruction and amusement. The four-year course at the Fairbanks high school admits to Washington State University by certificate.

Within a few miles of Fairbanks more than thirty thousand acres of productive land have been preempted according to the United States homestead laws and the productiveness of the soil is amazing to all visitors. This is especially true of the region round the Hot Springs in the lower valley of the Tanana, where all sorts of delicious vegetables are raised and the hay crop is enormous. The town is governed by a council of seven members and a courtesy mayor. The finances are provided by various forms of taxation and assessment, and in 1906 the budget amounted to almost a hundred thousand dollars, which

supports the fire department, the police, the streets and the hospitals.

During the last long reaches of the Yukon through low-lying plains the principal town to interest the traveller is Nulato, of tragic memory. It is about three hundred miles below Tanana. Here occurred bloody encounters with savage natives and more than once the fortification there was destroyed and all its garrison murdered.

Nulato is within the United States Reindeer Reserve and is one of the headquarters for the herd. These are the result of the application made by the Jesuit director of the Roman Catholic Mission, who, in 1899, wrote Dr. Sheldon Jackson, assuring him that there was plenty of deer moss within sixty miles of that place.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### REINDEER AND ESKIMOS.

**T**HE story of the introduction of the reindeer into Alaska is most interesting. They have long been comparatively abundant on the other side of Bering Strait but had never been brought to Alaska, nor had any serious attempt ever been made to domesticate the caribou. On the Asian continent his value had long been recognized. Like the banyan tree of the Tropics this product of the North is useful in every part to the native. His flesh is nutritious and especially rich in carbon. The milk is used for drinking and for cheese; the horns are utilized for making knife handles, or when scraped for forming ammonia; the skins are invaluable for clothing and for boots; even the entrails are valuable. The animals feed on the moss of the tundra which has been repeatedly pointed out as sufficient to support ten millions of them; they find it for themselves, scratching up the snow with their sharp hoofs. They require no grass, hay or grain. As carriers across the snow they are far superior to the Eskimo or malamute dogs, and more reliable, a team often being able to make one hundred miles a day.

Dr. Sheldon Jackson, Commissioner of Education for Alaska, conceived the plan of importing a sufficient number of these reindeer from Siberia, together with a number of Laplanders, Finns and Norwegians who were acquainted with their habits and management, so as to train the native Eskimo in the use of the animals. It was felt by him that as the native population was becoming more and more desperate owing to diminution of their natural food supply something should be done to support the unfortunates. With great difficulty he prevailed upon

Congress to appropriate a fund for this purpose. His plan was to introduce at each of the thirty-nine schools scattered through the frozen north, from the Yukon to the end of the Aleutian Islands, a nucleus of a herd which should be under the care of reliable natives selected by the teachers. He assured the Government that "reindeer entrusted to the ordinary individual savage would disappear within a twelve-month after they had been given to him." So he inaugurated the policy of lending small herds to missionary societies, the Government reserving the right, after a term of not less than three years, to call upon the mission station for the same number of deer that composed the herd leased, being regarded as "in the nature of an outfit of industrial apparatus." Knowing the natural increase of the reindeer he predicted that a herd of five hundred ought to furnish an increase of two hundred each spring. In 1891 sixteen head of reindeer were introduced as an experiment; by natural increase and by the accretion of others imported from Siberia, in two years the number had risen to fourteen hundred and sixty-six. The next year one hundred and sixty-one were imported from Siberia, and in spite of some losses by the next year they had increased to more than two thousand. At the present time the herds are estimated to amount to more than ten times that number, some under Federal control, others loaned to missions for the purposes of industrial training, and still others kept at special stations for emergency purposes.

How useful they may be in such circumstances is well shown by a report made to the Government by the Honorable John G. Brady, the former missionary Governor of Alaska, in 1899. After showing how unjust many persons and even newspapers had been in reviling the chief promoter of the scheme, and calling it a fad, he goes on to say:

"The purchase of several hundred of these animals in Norway and Lapland and their shipment across the Atlantic and the continent and by steamship again from Seattle to Haines Mission, and the dying of a large proportion of them at that point, and all the subsequent evils, had nothing to do with the problems of the introduction of domestic

reindeer into western and northern Alaska for the use of the Eskimos. When editors and writers raise the cry of ' failure ' and ' fad ' they simply show that they are not acquainted with the facts, or, if they are, that they are prejudiced and are not willing to stick to the truth.

“ At the very time the cry of starvation was raised in the newspapers concerning the miners on the Klondike, another cry went up that a large number of whalers at Point Barrow were caught in the ice and unless they got relief many would starve to death before spring. Accordingly the revenue cutter *Bear* was outfitted and sent to give relief. She landed a party of three officers — Lieutenants Jarvis and Berthoff and Dr. Call. Under conditions that try men's souls, they made their way from the spot where they were landed at Cape Vancouver, a long distance south of the Yukon River, around the margin of the coast, till they came to the missionary reindeer station at Port Clarence. Here Mr. W. T. Lopp and the native Eskimo, Antisarlook, at the earnest entreaty of Lieutenant Jarvis, turned over their herds of reindeer to him, amounting in all to four hundred and thirty-seven animals, and the natives not only parted with their animals, but volunteered to go with Lieutenant Jarvis to drive them to Point Barrow.

“ After several fearful weeks they reached that station and gave immediate relief to those hungry men and kept them alive until the icepack broke up. About a hundred of these animals had to be slaughtered. Surely there was no ' fad ' about reindeer at this point. The food they afforded kept two hundred souls alive. Who has ever seen a single notice of this event to the credit of the reindeer, the missionary or the native? Attention was called last year to the heroism of the above-mentioned officers. It will surely compare well with any act of bravery that has occurred within recent years, and we think that Congress should not allow another session to pass without giving them due recognition.”

Congress ultimately granted Lieutenant Jarvis a medal for gallant conduct.

The imported Lapps and such natives as took hold of the industry

have prospered to such an extent that some of them have accumulated herds of more than a hundred, and one woman, Mary Andre-wuk, known as the Reindeer Queen, had in 1905 more than three hundred. The advantage to the natives in inspiring in them self-respect and a sense of independence justified the experiment even had it not proved successful in other respects. It is interesting to know that reindeer moss was recommended as a suitable food for human beings by an edict of Gustavus III of Sweden. The taste of it is slightly pungent or acrid, but rather agreeable. The reindeer require no attention: they find their own food, scraping it up from beneath the snow with their sharp hoofs. They do not thrive on grass, hay or grain, though in summer they like grass. An interesting book might be written on the experiences of those who drove bargains with the native tribes of Siberia for reindeer. They had pretty exciting times. Finally the Russian Government forbade their exportation but not before the industry was well established.

Had it not been for the coast mountains the Yukon might have entered Norton Sound after a straight course of less than a hundred miles from Nulato; instead it skirts these mountains, which are probably packed with gold, and flows almost directly south, part of the way running parallel to the great Kuskokwim, and then turning north, debouches into Bering Sea by at least seven mouths. The delta is about a hundred miles wide and the immense quantity of river water pouring out into the sea makes it shallow and fresh for a long distance. The whole region where it ends its course is densely infested with the blood-thirstiest mosquitoes in the world. A sufferer from their torments writes thus feelingly: "Breeding here, as they do in the vast network of slough and swamp, they are able to rally round and to infest the wake and progress of the explorer beyond all adequate description, and language is unable to portray the misery and annoyance accompanying their presence. It will naturally be asked how do the natives bear this? They too are annoyed and suffer, but it should be borne in mind that their bodies are anointed with rancid oil and certain am-

moniacal vapors, peculiar to their garments from constant wear, have a repellent power which even the mosquitoes, blood-thirsty as they are, are hardly equal to meet. . . .

“ The traveller who exposes his bare eyes or face here loses his natural appearance; his eyelids swell up and close, and his face becomes one mass of lumps and fiery pimples. Mosquitoes torture the Indian dogs to death, especially if one of these animals, by mange or otherwise, loses an inconsiderable portion of its thick hairy covering, and even drive the bear and deer into the water.”

This is the barren region of the Coast Eskimos, who, living apart from the whites, have been able to preserve better their integrity than those nearer the settlements.

The Eskimo or InnuIt are among the most interesting people of Alaska, forming about sixty per cent. of the whole native population. According to the census of 1890 there were about fourteen thousand of them, mostly settled permanently along the coast of the Bering Sea, and very few, less than one-fifth, within the Arctic Circle. They are by nature “ peaceful and docile, trustful and generous.” General Greely believes that they are gradually disappearing before the advance of the white men, whose treatment of them, as of all the native races, he calls “ disgraceful to a nation claiming to be civilized, humanitarian or Christian.” He says:

“ In general, contact with the white man has steadily tended to degeneration among the four principal tribes of Alaska, though at times there have been spasmodic and usually fruitless efforts on the part of the United States to correct the most flagrant and degrading violations of personal rights and public decency. . . . In a journey of over two thousand miles through Alaska, the writer discussed the situation with a dozen or more missionaries at nine separate stations and representing six religious bodies. Every one answered in the negative when asked if the natives had improved in honesty, the men in industry, the women in chastity, and the youth in promise of higher morality.

“ In mining towns and camps the saloon and dance-house, which foster in men indulgence in liquor and offer to young girls the allurements of finery and a life of apparent ease, are factors potent in degeneration and so attractive in appearance that only few natives withstand them. At remote points traders, fishermen and whalers have been only too often guilty of gross misconduct destructive of the moral character and physical health of the unfortunate native.”

General Greely thinks that the Eskimos have suffered more than any other Alaskan race by contact with the white man: “ Vitally changed conditions of life have seriously affected the Eskimo, who find their means of subsistence largely destroyed, their habitat invaded, and new methods of life forced upon them. Decimated by epidemic diseases introduced by the whites, victims of unprincipled liquor dealers, often maltreated by vicious traders, and exploited by the unscrupulous, the steady degeneration of these hospitable, merry-hearted and simple-minded people is apparently a matter of time. The introduction of the reindeer, the efforts to teach industrial methods and the rendering of medical aid to the suffering, are the only redeeming and hopeful features of the Eskimo situation at present.”

The origin of the Eskimo is a mooted question, the balance of opinion swaying to the conclusion that they did not come from Asia but spread from the East. Their characteristic canoe or kayak, called by the Russians *bidarka*, is precisely like that used by the Greenland Eskimo. Their skin *parka*, or outside garment, worn alike by men, women and children, is also characteristic of the whole race. The Alaskan Eskimo are divided into various tribes such as the *Kopagmute*, *Nunatagmute*, *Mahlemute*, *Unalignmute*, and others, all ending in *mute* and having similar manners and customs. They have no definitely recognized chief but in each settlement generally one man, a successful trader or fisherman, called the *umalik* or spokesman, holds some influence among them, not comparable, however, to that of the shaman who takes a great part in their festivities and stimulates their superstitions. They are skilful fishermen and hunters. Fish they catch

with hooks and nets; they spear seal on the ice, their implements made of spruce or larch headed with stone or bone or walrus teeth. Parties of a hundred or more natives, all in their kayaks, have been seen silently and in perfect order going out to hunt the beluga or white whale. At a signal given by the leader, the kayaks paddle to seaward of the school and yelling and shrieking and splashing with paddles and spears, frighten the belugas ashore. In former days they would sometimes secure as many as a hundred in a single day. Wounded whales would be kept afloat by means of inflated bladders made of young sealskins.

A feast would follow the slaughter of the beluga, the natives liking the blubber and meat uncooked, or at least parboiled, with whale or seal oil as a sauce. The skins they tan with putrefied fish roe. In summer they do their cooking out of doors and live in log houses roofed with skins and open in front, without chimneys. Their winter houses are half underground huts, often constructed of whale ribs against which are piled logs of drift wood. Outside of this another wall is built, either of stones or logs, the intervals filled with earth or rubble; the whole structure is then covered with sods, leaving a small opening at the top which can be closed by a frame holding a thin, translucent seal skin. The entrance is a passage ten or twelve feet in length which must be "negotiated" on hands and knees. Inside the entrance visitor or fresh air is barred by a bear or reindeer skin curtain. In the centre is the fireplace, the smoke from which is supposed to find its way out of the roof aperture, but generally gets into the eyes of the inmates. The floor may be planked and the family sleep on a sort of divan, covered with mats and skins, which is built along the sides. In case two families inhabit one house the sleeping-places are separated by mat-curtains or a conventional piece of wood, which serves the imagination as a barrier.

Each village has an assembly house called *kashga* which is often as much as sixty feet square and twenty or thirty feet high. A raised platform sometimes made in three tiers runs around the sides and the general fireplace is very large. Here are carried on the common labors

of the natives, their councils, their feasts and festivals, and here sleep the adult unmarried males. Their hot baths also are performed in its superheated and fetid atmosphere.

They love to masquerade and their dances are often accomplished in masks. Sometimes the women appear in male garments, wearing mustaches with bead pendants instead of labrets in the under lip. Sometimes the men appear as women. Their only musical instrument is a bladder drum which is beaten with a thump and a pause, then two thumps and a pause, like a slow waltz. This is accompanied by weird singing. The dancing consists wholly of contortions without moving from the spot. This posturing, which displays suppleness, never depicts anything indecent or immodest. The men wear on these occasions white reindeer skin and summer boots, the women their ordinary dress with the addition of bracelets and beads.

Lieutenant L. Zagoskin of the Russian Navy thus describes an entertainment given by the Eskimo women:—

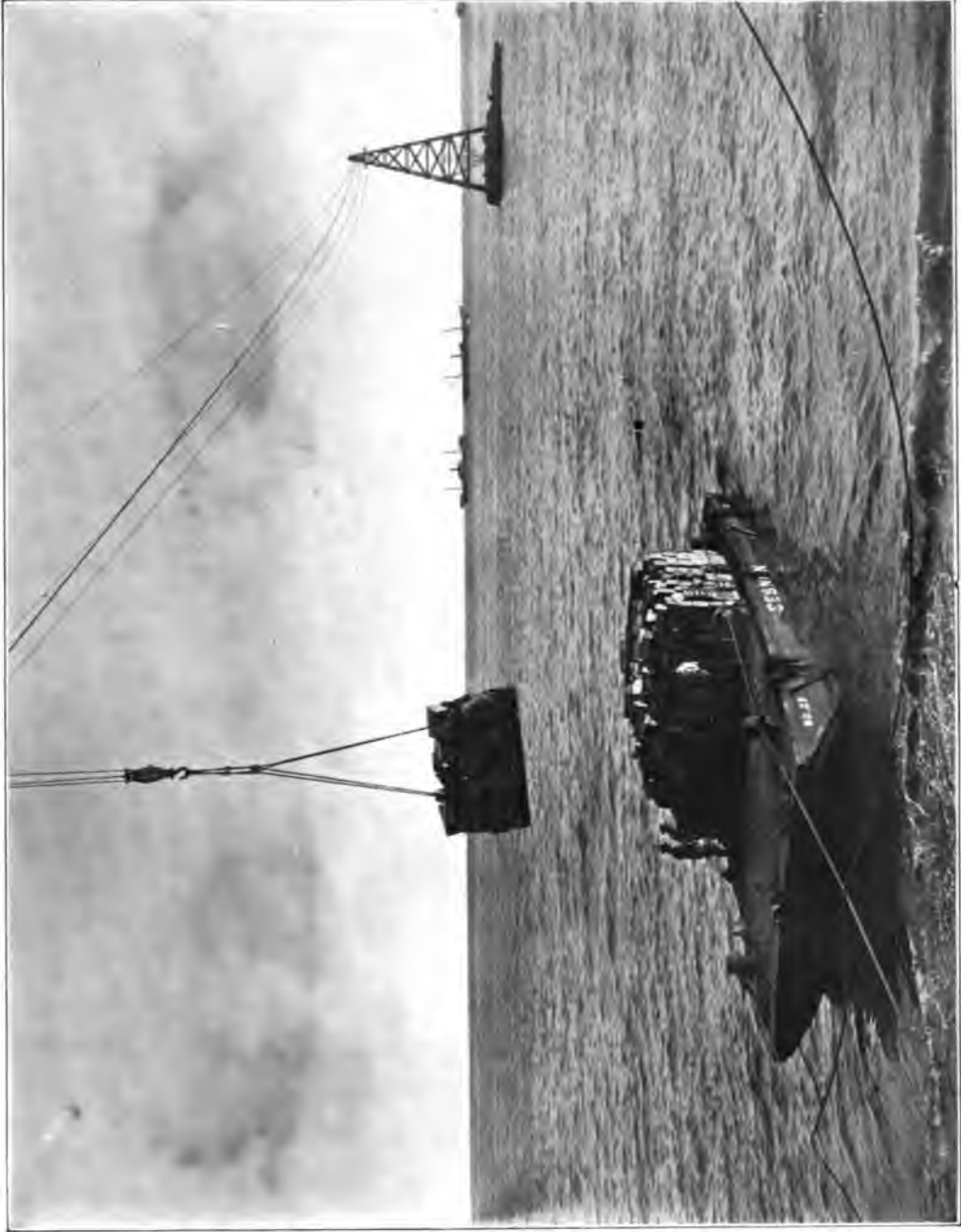
“ We entered the kashga by the common passage and found the guests already assembled but of the hostesses nothing was to be seen. On three sides of the apartment stone lamps were lighted, the fire-hole was covered with boards, one of them having a circular opening through which the hostesses were to make their appearance. Two other burning lamps were placed in front of the fire-hole. The guests who formed the chorus began to sing to the sound of the drum, two men keeping them in order by beating time with sticks adorned with wolfs' tails and gulls' wings. Thus a good half hour passed by. Of the song my interpreter told me that it consisted of pleasantry directed against the women; that it was evident they had nothing to give, as they had not shown themselves for so long a time. Another song praised the housewifely accomplishments of some woman whose appearance was impatiently expected with a promised trencher of the mixed mess of reindeer fat and berries. No sooner was this song finished than the woman appeared and was received with the greatest enthusiasm. The dish was set before the men, and the woman retreated



amid vociferous compliments on her culinary skill. She was followed by another woman. The beating of drums increased in violence and the wording of the song was changed. Standing up in the centre of the circle the woman began to relate, in mimicry and gesture, how she obtained the fat, how she stored it in various receptacles, how she cleansed and melted it, and then placing a kantag on her head she invited the spectators with gestures to approach. The song went on, while eagerness to partake of the promised luxury lighted up the faces of the crowd. At last the wooden spoons were distributed, one to each man, and nothing was heard for some time but the guzzling of the luscious fluid. Another woman appeared, followed by still another, and luxuries of all kinds were produced in quick succession and as quickly despatched, while the singers pointedly alluded to the praiseworthy Russian custom of distributing tobacco. When the desired luxury had been produced a woman represented with great skill the various stages of stupefaction resulting from smoking and snuffing. All the women appeared in men's parkas."

The return entertainment presented by the men began with a chorus sung under the fire-hole. They informed the women that trapping, hunting and trade were bad and that they had nothing to do but sing and dance to please the women. Then an antiphonal chorus by the women replied that since they were so lazy that they could not get any food and cared for nothing but smoking and bathing, they had better go supperless to bed. Then the men replied that they would go and hunt for something. One of them appeared through the opening in the fire-hole. He was dressed in female apparel with bead pendants in his nose and with fringes of wolverine tails and beads and bracelets, and this one mimicked the actions of the women. Then throwing off his parka he gave a vivid representation of how seated in his swift kayak he pursued the maklak seal. A whole boiled seal was then served. Others in like manner represented a reindeer hunt, and all sorts of domestic exercises. Sometimes practical jokes are played and are always taken in good spirit and never resented.





UNLOADING FREIGHT AT NOME.

The autumnal festival in honor of deceased kinsfolk is thus described by Mr. Ivan Petrof, who is an authority on Alaskan ethnology:—

“ At sunset the men assemble in the kashga, and, after a hurried bath, ornament each other by tracing various figures with a mixture of oil and charcoal on the naked back. Two boys, who for this occasion are respectively named Raven and Hawk, are in attendance, mixing the paint, etc. Finally the faces also are thickly smeared, and then the females are summoned into the kashga. After a brief lapse of time a noise is heard, shrieks and yells, snorting and roaring, and the disguised men, emerging from the fire-hole, show their heads above the floor, blowing and puffing like seals. It is impossible to distinguish any human figure, as some are crawling with their feet foremost, others running on their hands and feet, while the head of another is seen protruding between the legs of a companion. They all cling together and move in concert, like one immense snake. A number of the men wear masks representing the heads of animals, and the unsightly beings advance upon the spectators, but chiefly endeavoring to frighten the women, who have no means of escaping molestation except by buying off the actors with presents. Knowing what was before them, they have brought the kantags or wooden bowls full of delicious morsels—beluga blubber, walrus meat, whale-oiled berries, and other dainties. When each of the maskers has eaten and filled a bowl or two to take home, they indulge in a pantomime and gesture play of a highly grotesque character. After completing the ceremony in the kashga the maskers frequently visit some of the dwellings and receive gifts in each, the whole performance ending with singing, dancing and feasting in the kashga.”

At one of these annual memorial feasts witnessed by Zagoskin there were seventy persons present and the gifts that were to be distributed in memory of the seven who had died consisted of spears, arrows, various garments, seal skins, paddles, knives, hatchets, rings, mats and other articles. Shamans or tungaks acted as masters of the ceremony and furnished the special songs. Then came the dinner, which consisted

of mountains of blubber, several boiled seals, and quantities of dried fish. There were as many as fifteen different dishes or courses.

Another quaint festivity is in honor of the spirits of the sea, which they call *ingiak*. This is performed with the bladders of all the creatures killed during the year. During the first days of December these bladders — of fish, rats, mice, squirrels, and seals, bear or deer — are inflated, painted gaudy colors and hung up in the kashga. The men likewise contribute curiously carved figures of birds and fishes, sometimes with ingeniously contrived eyes, heads or wings. These figures are manipulated all day long and in the meantime are well cured in smoke, amid the chanting of melancholy songs. On the last day they are taken down, attached to painted sticks and carried down to the sea, where they are weighted with stones and set afloat. The people watch them and from their behavior the shamans are enabled to calculate the prosperity of the coming year.

The daily customs of the Alaska Eskimo are quaint and curious. The unmarried men sleep in the kashga, some on reindeer skins, others on bare planks, covering themselves with their parkas in lieu of pajamas, with their trousers for pillows. About eight o'clock in the morning the first person who happens to awake lights the oil lamp. By and by the women bring in the breakfast. After breakfast the men attend to their various duties — in looking after their traps or going with a dog-team for wood; the boys and girls set snares for small game. Early in the afternoon the men return from their work. Their wives help them get off their wet clothes, unharness the dogs and look after the fish or the seal that they have brought home. After dinner the bath is in order. A great fire is lighted inside the kashga, which is speedily heated to suffocation. The men remove their garments, lash themselves with alder branches and dance about, and when they are in a vigorous perspiration they lather themselves with what serves them for soap. This they wash off with fresh water and fling it into the four corners. Then they rush out into the snow or jump into a river if one be near and free from ice. Then the opening of the kashga

is removed so that a little ventilation may enter and the men sit around on the platform as if they had had a Turkish bath.

When a native is ill the medicine man is called to drive out the evil spirit. The process is thus described:—

“ In one of the dwellings sits the patient, suffering from fever and rheumatic pains; before him are placed two lighted oil lamps, and a parka is drawn over his head, while two shamans or tungaks, one standing on each side, alternately sing and beat the drum. Behind them, faintly visible in the semidarkness, is the head of an old woman who, while imitating the croaking of a raven, rubs and pounds the back of the patient. If the pain does not cease the old woman changes her tactics and also her voice, imitating successively the chattering of magpies, the barking of dogs, and the howling of wolves, and if all this be in vain she throws herself upon the sufferer, cuffing and beating him until she makes him forget one pain in another, while the tungaks sing louder and louder and the drums give forth a deafening noise. At last she snatches the parka from the patient's head, yells repeatedly, and points to the roof; the cover of the smoke-hole is removed and the evil spirit which has caused the sickness escapes amid the beating of drums and the triumphant cry, ‘ He is gone! He is gone! Ugh! Ugh! ’ and the old woman, her task accomplished, collapses into a mass of rags upon the floor. It is the third spirit driven out of this patient — how many more dwell within him nobody can tell; if it was the last he will soon mend, but, on the other hand, if not the last there will be more chanting, more drumming, more cuffing and more payments to the cunning tungaks, until the sick man either dies or can pay no more. The tungaks claim that their scheme and skill consist in discovering what spirit infests the sick man, and to drive it out they do not consider difficult at all.”

## CHAPTER XV.

### ST. MICHAEL'S AND NOME.

**T**HE steamships plying the Yukon, unless they get stuck on some sandbar at its mouth, land passengers about sixty miles north of the Afun or Aphoon branch of the river at Fort St. Michael's, which was founded by the Russians in 1833, and still boasts the redoubt and storehouse built by Mikhail Tebenkof in 1833. The Russian fort was attacked in 1836 by hostile Unaligmutes, who occupied the coast of North Sound as far down as the Yukon and up into the country as far as the mountains. It was successfully defended, however. A Russian church was built here and is still maintained. St. Michael's is a United States Military Reservation and is situated on an island twenty-five miles long and six or seven wide and rising to volcanic heights called the Shaman Mountains. Commercial and transportation companies have been permitted to establish themselves there, and travellers are accommodated at a good hotel, but no liquor is permitted to be sold. The Eskimos bring here their beautiful carved walrus tusks, toy models of their kayaks and bidarkas, furs and basket ware.

A small tug or steamer sails from here the hundred and eleven miles across Norton Sound to Nome, where we may have the exciting experience of being landed in the surf, perhaps getting thoroughly wet in the icy waters of the roadstead. Few of the early gold-seekers escaped that baptism of the north. At the present time when passengers are desirous of landing at Nome they are transferred to a stout flat-bottomed barge which is hauled in by a cable till it grounds. Then a cage is let down from a heavy projecting beam and when filled is carried over the surf to a high platform on the land.

Mr. John Scudder McLain, who accompanied the Senatorial "Chi-

Cha-Kos" on their memorable trip to Alaska in 1903, thus gives his impression of Nome:—

// "Take a low sandy beach, one without a tree within fifty miles; show a white line where the waves break into foam along the shore; stretch along the water's edge for a mile or more a double row of frame buildings, most of them two stories high and facing each other; cover the street between with boards laid on the sand; don't be very particular about making the street lines straight, nor insist that the street shall have uniform width; let the elevation and width of the sidewalks be determined by chance, it produces more variety and claims closer attention from the pedestrian; fill the lower floors of the buildings along the street with business undertakings of various kinds, and the upper floors reserve for living purposes; throw in a liberal portion of places devoted to the gratification of highly developed thirsts; fill the air at frequent intervals with the sounds of ragtime music; gather on the sidewalk and in the narrow street groups of men who seem to have nothing particular to do and are doing it; then go back from the first street and locate a church or two, a school house, a federal courthouse and custom house, sprinkle around a few small buildings for residence purposes; fill the air with a cold drizzle and you have the materials out of which were obtained my first impressions of Nome, on the morning of July 29."

Nome stretches along the beach almost due east and west for the distance of twenty-five or more city blocks from Snake River, where the two cemeteries are laid out. At first it consisted of a single street which was the beach itself, but as it grew one parallel street after another was added until now it lies on the tundra half a dozen or more streets back. The buildings, especially along the front, are a curious and picturesque jumble of residences, apartment houses, shops, saloons, banks, millinery establishments, churches, dance-halls, government buildings, steamship and transportation offices, hospitals, and schools. Here one finds great heaps of coal worth almost its weight in gold, here an Eskimo tent. The buildings next the sea project out over the



water. The streets, though nominally laid out four square, have in some cases got juggled and cross at angles; buildings have been erected with slight attention to what might be called registration; one may be a couple of feet in front of another, while still another faces a different point of the compass.

There are board sidewalks not quite so well kept as the one at Atlantic City. In some places it is wide, then it narrows, then it curves and straightens itself; it is above the street; it is below the street; here it is well kept, here, possibly at a crossing, it is badly wrecked. Nome has all the conveniences of a modern city in the way of amusements, educational and otherwise. It is connected with Seattle by cable and wireless and a system of long-distance telephone puts it into communication with the other mining centres of the peninsula, which may be reached, in summer by automobiles or stages, and in winter by reindeer or dog teams and sledges. There are excellent schools serving a permanent population of four thousand and more. There are three newspapers; a water system which is kept open in winter by a parallel system of steam pipes has been established. The town is brilliantly lighted with electricity, though owing to the price of coal the light comes high. The summer traffic in freight is said to amount to a hundred thousand tons. One lumber firm at Nome imports stock by the million feet from Puget Sound. A railway, known as the Wild Goose, runs north from Nome fifty miles through the river valley and, crossing to the headwaters of the Kruzgamepa, has its terminus at Lane's Landing on the Kuzitrin.

One may go by boat to Tin City, three miles west of Teller, at the Cape Prince of Wales, where valuable tin mines have been discovered. This was the region where the early miners found sluicing for gold impossible owing to the presence of heavy gravel. They did not recognize in this enemy a masked and secret friend. It was really stream tin and the probabilities are that in time a good part of the twenty million dollars' worth of tin used in the United States will be supplied from the Seward Peninsula.

The Congregational Church established a mission at Cape Prince of Wales in 1890; four years later the minister in charge was murdered by some renegade Eskimos. The murderers were promptly executed by the authorities of their own village. This was one of the few known instances of the natives of this part of Alaska ever showing any unprovoked lawlessness toward the whites.

From the highest part of the Cape Prince of Wales on a clear day the mountains of Kamchatka can be seen, and one can not help wondering how it was that the corresponding glimpses of Alaska from the high hills back of East Cape, rising as they do to a height of a mile, did not long before cause it to be surmised that the Bering Strait separated two continents.

From Nome one may sail directly to Seattle, a distance of nearly twenty-seven hundred and fifty miles. One passes not far from the great St. Lawrence Island, which lies about one hundred and fifty miles south of Bering Sea and within sight of Indian Point in Siberia, forty miles or so away. It is about a hundred miles long and forty miles wide. Its coast is lined with high cliffs which sweep up into considerable mountains in the interior, where there are a number of lakes connected with salmon streams. There is only one good harbor. The inhabitants, though they deny the fact, are descendants of Siberian natives, who frequently abuse them and even massacre them. Disease and famine in recent years have reduced the population considerably. It is now an interesting station for the reindeer which, with the instruction of the mission school, are helping the people to be self-supporting.

Lieutenant Maynard of the United States Navy, who visited this island in 1874, thus describes it:—

“ The surface is irregular and broken, consisting of hills connected by low flat plains, which are but a few feet above the level of the sea. Both the ranges of hills and the lowlands extend entirely across the island from north to south; hence, when approached from either direction, the latter are not seen at first, and the land has the appearance

of being several separate islands. Captain Cook, who discovered it in 1778, was thus deceived, and as he did not sail near enough afterwards to discover his mistake gave the supposed group the name of Cleaks Islands. There are no harbors, but good anchorage can be found at several points, with from six to eleven fathoms of water, in light weather or when the wind is from the land. It is covered in summer with grass, moss and flowers and in places a creeping willow grows, but neither trees nor shrubs of any kind. There are several lagoons and numerous fresh-water ponds, fed by small streams from the hills, are distributed over the plains. The greater part of the shore is a low sand beach, but at the southwestern end of the island and at several points on the northern shore, it rises into almost perpendicular cliffs, from one hundred to three hundred feet high. Those at the southwestern end present a singular appearance when viewed from the water. The beating of the surf and the action of the water have broken up and worn away the material of which they are composed (talcose slate), leaving needles or spires, some of them one hundred feet in height, standing out several yards from the cliff. Deep cracks or fissures, extending from top to bottom, have also been formed in the cliffs, which are filled from the water's edge with solid masses of snow (although it was in the month of August we saw them) beautifully colored in many places by bird guano and reddish substance in the rock."

The same writer thus describes the appearance of the natives:—

"The men are tall and straight, without hair upon their faces except a slight mustache and a few scattered hairs upon the chins of the old men. They have black hair and eyes, and their complexion is of a very light copper color. Their dress consists of a kind of shirt reaching half way to the knee, made in some cases of tanned reindeer skin, and in others of bird skins (feathers outside). It fits closely around the neck and has a hood that can be drawn over the head, lined with the fur of dogs and foxes or with bird skins. It is confined at the waist by a belt, from which hang a sheath knife and a skin tobacco pouch.

Their breeches are made of tanned hair-seal skin, fitting the legs closely, and tied at the ankle with leather strings. They wear on their feet a kind of moccasin made of seal skin, with a sole of walrus hide.

“ The dress of the women is somewhat different. Their upper garment is made of the intestines of the walrus, neatly sewed together, and is similar in shape to that of the men, but longer and worn without a belt. Beneath this they wear short drawers, reaching only to the knee, made of tanned seal skins. Instead of moccasins they wear a sort of boot, the legs of which are made of either the throat or intestines of the walrus, and the sole of walrus hide. Most of the men shave the crown of their heads, leaving only a rim of their hair, about an inch wide entirely around the head. The women do not cut their hair, but part it in the middle, and wear it in two braids with strings of beads intermixed. Their foreheads, cheeks, chins and arms are tattooed in various devices with a light blue pigment of some kind, and the ears of some have little notches cut in them. None of the men are tattooed, but many wear little strings of beads in their ears. Their countenances are bright and rather intelligent and both men and women are lively and talkative.”

A little less than half way between St. Lawrence Island and the Pribilofs stands the lonely island of St. Matthew. It was discovered and named by Bering, and rediscovered by Captain Cook, who gave it another name that did not live. His name for the queer promontory at the southeastern end was Cape Upright. This is a perpendicular crag fifteen hundred feet high. On the northwestern end is another bluff that rises to a height of sixteen hundred and seventy feet. Here also are clear streams and ponds filled with trout. Its only inhabitants are enormous white bears, some of them as much as eight feet long, and innumerable birds — shags, gulls, sea-parrots, murries, chulskies, eider ducks, Canada geese, plovers, and great blue cranes.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### SEALS, SEA - LIONS AND WALRUS.

**T**HE one hundred and seventieth degree west from Greenwich passes through the East Cape of Siberia, cuts through the very centre of St. Lawrence Island and divides the Pribilof Islands. Here it is interesting to make a pause and observe the habits of the fur-bearing seal, or, as it should properly be called, the sea-bear. The discovery of the islands has already been mentioned. They are now under the protection of the United States Government, which maintains a guard over them to see that poachers do not land for the purpose of killing the few seals that are left. The cause of the tremendous reduction in the number of seals resorting to these islands is now universally recognized to be pelagic fishing. As Canadian sealers were engaged in the destructive pursuit of the seals, as the skins were dressed in London and formed an important industry there, an international conference was held in Paris in 1893; the testimony seemed conflicting, and the two countries agreed to limit pelagic sealing by prohibiting it at any time within sixty miles of the Pribilof Islands and permitting it to be followed in the rest of Bering Sea for ninety days following May 1. Two years later it was estimated that the herds of seals which numbered fully two millions — some extravagantly put it at five millions — in 1867 had been reduced to about 200,000. Indeed it was gravely suggested by Professor Huxley that it would not be such a very serious loss to mankind if the seals were all extirpated. He said, very cynically: —

“ Mankind will not suffer much if the ladies are obliged to do without seal-skin jackets, and the fraction of the English, Canadian and

American population which lives on the seal-skin industry will be no worse off than the vastly greater multitude who have had to suffer for the vagaries of fashion times out of number. Certainly if the seals are to be the source of constant bickering between two nations, the sooner they are abolished the better."

But President Jordan, criticising the same proposal which was put forward by treasury agent Joseph B. Crowley, utterly condemns it, declaring that it "would necessarily involve all this inhuman waste on a wholesale scale and lodge the odium for it for all time on the Government of the United States. Besides," he adds, "it would not be possible totally to exterminate the race without keeping up the slaughter for many years, as not all the animals are present at one time a season." He says: "A hunted remnant must remain, which, if left unmolested, would restock the rookeries and reopen the whole question."

The English Government, in spite of the able arguments of James G. Blaine, then Secretary of State, were convinced of the comparative harmlessness of pelagic sealing; thus the fate of the wonderful rookeries was sealed. Once before they had been threatened with extinction, just as those in the South Pacific were exterminated by a treatment utterly cruel, selfish and blind. The number of seals killed on the Pribilof Islands was carefully regulated and the Aleuts who were colonized on them were the only person allowed to do the driving. Although one competent observer had reported to the Russian Government that he had seen a school of fur seals covering the surface of the ocean for two nautical miles, the determined onslaught of pelagic fishermen did not begin to take serious proportions until the early seventies. Then the reckless way in which they were pursued had its full and fell effect. It was universally admitted by those engaged in the business that not one out of ten seals killed or wounded was obtained before they sank, and as it is impossible to tell the sex of the creatures when they are in the water a large proportion of the catch, as well as those lost, consisted of the cows and their unborn young.

It has been claimed by the opponents of the seals that the damage they did to the fishing interest by the enormous amount of fish they consumed more than offset the advantage of keeping their rookeries intact. But on the other hand it was argued that the seals never went into the great depths where cod and such fish live, but subsist on dog-fish and similar surface fish, thus doing immense good in keeping down the insatiate horde of those harriers of the deep. It has been estimated that when the rookeries were at their prime the seals consumed six million tons of fish per year.

Of late years the Japanese sealing fleet which was not bound by the convention between England and America has largely increased. They have refused to observe any close season and in some instances they have even attempted to plunder the rookeries on St. Paul Island. Every year their boldness increases. In 1907 they secured more than thirteen thousand skins in Alaskan waters. Properly conserved the seal islands would afford a legitimate traffic of more than one million dollars a year for centuries to come.

The two principal islands of the Pribilof group are thirty miles apart. St. Paul has an area of about twenty-five hundred acres or thirty-five square miles; its highest elevation, Bogoslov, an extinct volcano, is six hundred feet and its population of transplanted Aleuts, most of them formerly quite prosperous, is reckoned as not far from three hundred. It has forty-two miles of shore line, almost half of which was formerly occupied by seals.

St. George is twenty-seven square miles in area and the top of its mountain is nine hundred and thirty feet above the sea. It has a smaller population, both of seals and drivers. The only trees are creeping willows; there are a few bushes. The natives with care raise lettuce, radishes, and turnips, but the multitude of flowers makes them beautiful in summer. The summer climate is rainy and foggy — far more disagreeable than that of Sitka, which is on the same parallel of latitude. Owing to the difference of height, five times as much rain falls on St. George as on St. Paul, though they are such near neighbors.

The winter climate is rather cold, the thermometer sometimes registering as much as fifteen degrees below zero.

The islands are the haunts of innumerable birds. Mr. Henry W. Elliott describes not less than forty different species, many of them, to be sure, like the robin, temporary visitants, stragglers brought from the mainland evidently against their will. He says of the great bird rookeries on the bluffs of St. George: — “ After the dead silence of a long ice-bound winter, the arrival of large flocks of those sparrows of the north, the ‘ choochkies ’ is most cheerful and interesting. Those plump little auks are bright, fearless, vivacious birds with bodies round and fat. They come usually in chattering flocks on or immediately after the first of May and are caught by the people with hand scoops or dip nets to any number that may be required for the day’s consumption; their tiny rotund forms making pies of rare savory virtue, and being also baked and roasted and stewed in every conceivable shape by the Russian cooks; indeed they are equal to the reed-birds of the South.

“ These welcome visitors are succeeded along about the twentieth of July by large flocks of fat, red-legged turnstones, which come in suddenly from the west or north where they have been breeding and stop on the islands for a month or six weeks, as the case may be, to feed luxuriantly on the flesh flies and their eggs. Those handsome birds go in among the seals familiarly chasing the flies, gnats, etc. They are followed, as they leave, in September, by several species of jacksnipe and a plover; these, however, soon depart as early as the end of October and the beginning of November — and then winter fairly closes in upon the islands: the loud roaring, incessant seal din, together with the screams and darkening flight of innumerable water-fowl, is replaced in turn again by absolute silence, marking out, as it were, in lines of sharp and vivid contrast, summer’s life and winter’s death.”

Wonderful as the bird life is on the large inhabited islands, it cannot compare with the so-called Walrus Island, which lies sixty miles



from the Northeast Point of St. Paul's — a mere lava ledge often awash with surf and occasionally haunted by male walrus. Mr. Elliott calls this little islet the most interesting single spot known to the naturalist to study the habits of bird life. "Here without exertion or risk," he says, "he can observe and walk among tens upon tens of thousands of screaming waterfowl, and as he sits down upon the polished lava rock, he becomes literally ignored and environed by these feathered friends as they reassume their varied positions of incubation which he disturbed them from by his arrival. Generation after generation of their kind have resorted to this rock unmolested, and to-day, when you get among them, all doubt and distrust seem to have been eliminated from their natures.

"The island itself is rather unusual in those formations which we find peculiar to Alaskan waters. It is almost flat, with slight irregular undulations on top, spreading over an area of five acres perhaps. It rises abruptly, though low, from the sea, and it has no safe beach upon which a person can land from a boat; not a stick of timber or twig of shrubbery ever grew upon it, though the scant presence of low crawling grasses, in the central portion, prevents the statement that all vegetation is absent. Were it not for the frequent rains and dissolving fog, characteristic of summer weather here, the guano accumulation would be something wonderful to contemplate — Peru would have a rival. As it is, however, the birds when they return, year after year, find their nesting-floor swept as clean as if they had never sojourned there before.

"The scene of confusion and uproar that presented itself to my astonished senses when I approached this place in search of eggs, one threatening July morning, may be better imagined than described, for as the clumsy bidarka came under the lee of the low cliffs, swarm upon swarm of murrelets or 'arries' dropped in fright from their nesting shelves, and before they had control of their flight they struck to the right and the left of me, like so many cannon balls. I was forced, in self-protection, instantly to crouch for a few moments under the gun-

wale of the boat until the struggling startled flock passed, like an irresistible, surging wave, over my head. Words cannot depict the amazement and curiosity with which I gazed around, after climbing up to the rocky plateau and standing among myriads of breeding birds, that fairly covered the entire surface of the island with their shrinking forms, while others whirled in rapid flight over my head, as wheels within wheels, so thickly inter-running that the blue and gray of the sky was hidden from my view. Add to this impression the stunning whirr of hundreds of thousands of strong beating wings, and the muffled croakings of the 'arries,' coupled with an indescribable, disagreeable smell which arose from the broken eggs and other decaying substances, and a faint idea may be evoked of the strange reality spread before me."

Mr. Elliott and other unscientific observers of the fur-seal attribute to them almost human intelligence. He declares that the head, though small in proportion to the weight of the body, which is often in excess of five hundred pounds, is mostly occupied by brain. "The light frame-work of the skull supports an expressive pair of large bluish-hazel eyes, alternately burning with revengeful passionate light, then suddenly changing to the tones of tenderness and good nature.

"Look at it," he says, "as it comes leisurely swimming on toward the land; see how high above the water it carries its head, and how deliberately it surveys the beach, after having stepped upon it (for it may be truly said to step with its fore flippers, as they regularly alternate when it moves up), carrying the head well above them, erect and graceful, at least three feet above the ground."

Mr. Elliott claims that the expression of the cow-seal's eye is "really attractive, gentle and intelligent. The large, lustrous, blue-black eyes are humid and soft with the tenderest expression, while the small, well-formed head is poised as gracefully on her neck as can be well imagined. She is the very picture of benignity and satisfaction when she is poised, perched up on some convenient rock, and has an opportunity

to quietly fan herself, the eyes half closed and the head thrown back on her gently swelling shoulders.

“ Indeed one would think that the seal was a society lady just in the swim! ”

Mr. Elliott is a water color artist and paints pictures with a poetic touch.

In another place he says: “ The cows during the whole season do great credit to their amiable expression by their manner and behavior on the rookery. They never fight or quarrel one with the other and never or seldom utter a cry of pain or rage when they are roughly handled by the bulls.”

President Jordan cruelly effaces the pretty picture, saying: “ While the cows do not indulge in pitched battles, they are snappish creatures, uncivil to each other, cruel to pups not their own, and capable of giving their lords much well-deserved nagging.”

The wonderful intelligence credited to the seal does not receive the expert's sanction. He says:—“ The life-processes of the fur seal are perfect as clock-work, but its grade of intelligence is low. Its range of action is very slight. It is a wonderful automaton and the stress of its migrations will always keep it so.”

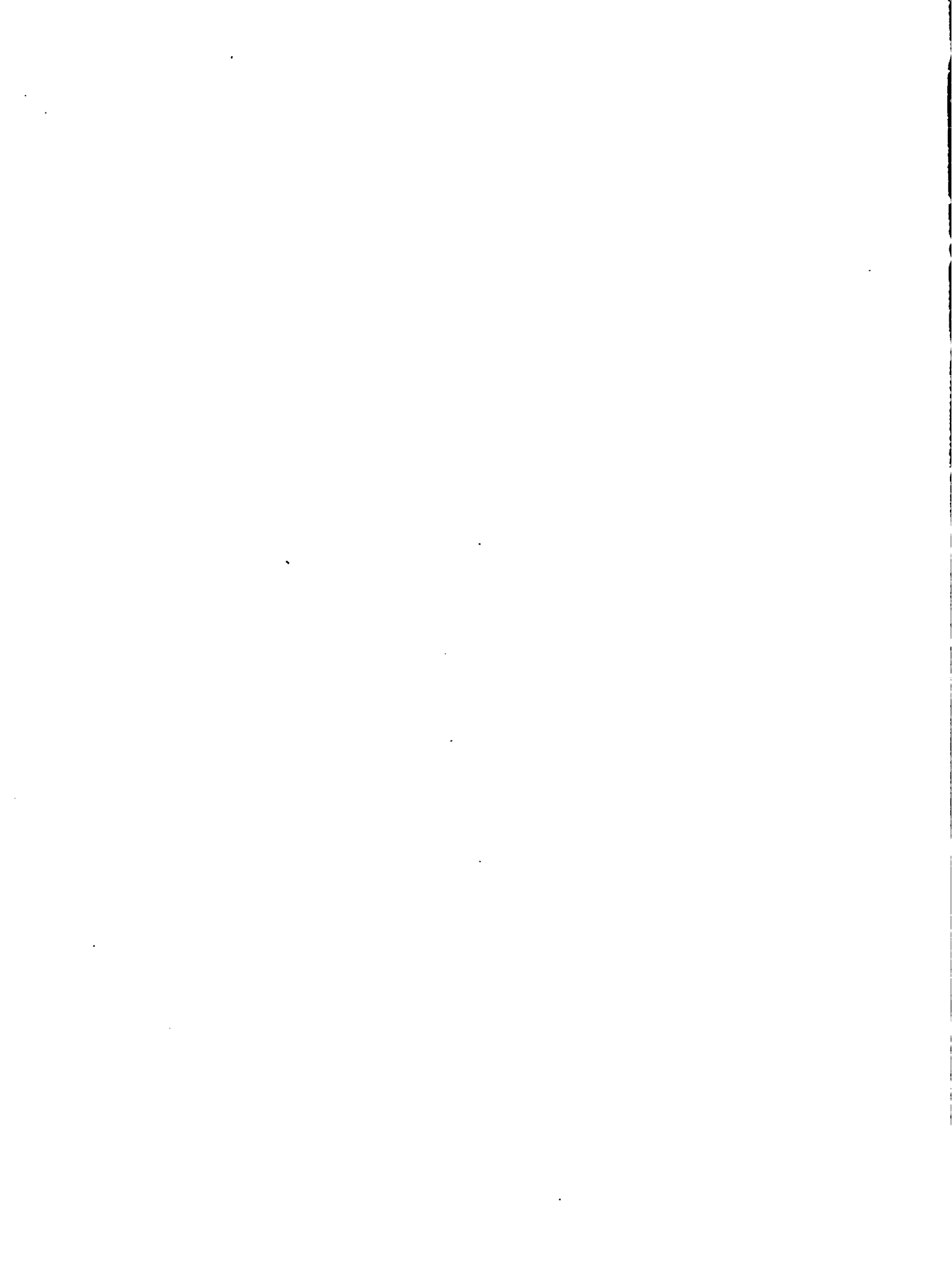
Keeping the scientific check on our imagination, it is still interesting to study the seal from the imaginative point of view.

Early in May come the vanguard of the males. They seem “ shy and sensitive,” not as yet ready to come out on the land. When the *sikatch* or master bull climbs up on a rock he regards it as his castle and is prepared to defend it with all his might. Mr. Elliott tells of one which met and successfully fought off not less than forty or fifty desperate attempts to drive him away.

“ When the fighting season was over,” he says, “ I saw him still there, covered with scars and frightfully gashed — raw, festering and bloody — one eye gouged out, but lording it bravely over his harem of fifteen or twenty females, who were all huddled together on the same spot of his first location and around him.”



WILD RAPIDS ON A MOUNTAIN STREAM.



The fighting is done with the teeth. The males seize each other and clench their jaws in vise-like grip. Mr. Elliott says:—“ They usually approach each other with comically averted heads, just as if they were ashamed of the rumpus which they are determined to precipitate. When they get near enough to reach one another they enter upon the repetition of many feints or passes before either one or the other takes the initiative by gripping. The heads are darted out and back as quick as a flash; their hoarse roaring and shrill piping whistle never ceases, while their fat bodies writhe and swell with exertion and rage; furious lights gleam in their eyes; their hair flies in the air and their blood streams down; all combined makes a picture so fierce and so strange that from its unexpected position and its novelty it is perhaps one of the most extraordinarily brutal contests one can witness.

“ In these battles of the seals the parties are always distinct — the one is offensive, the other defensive. If the latter proves the weaker, he withdraws from the position occupied, and is never followed by his conqueror, who complacently throws up one of his hind-flippers, fans himself as it were, to cool his fevered wrath and blood from the heat of the conflict and sinks into comparative quiet, only uttering a peculiar chuckle of satisfaction or contempt, with a sharp eye open for the next covetous bull or ‘ sea-catch.’ ”

The young bulls, called *kholostyáki* — that is to say bachelors — are always ready to get into the ranks of the *sikatchi* or masters. They hang around the rear of the rookeries and seize the chance to steal a cow from the “ harem.” Often the old bulls combine against such a seducer and the battle grows so fierce that death sometimes ensues. The fighting become fast and furious when the coming and going of the cows give better chances for such action. When a bull has chosen a station he refuses to leave it and the result is that at the end of the summer, no matter how fat and well-conditioned he may be he is greatly reduced in flesh.

The cows bring forth their young almost as soon as they “ haul up ” on the shore. They nurse them for a few days, very much as

any other mammals, not allowing them to move away. After a few days the cows put out to sea for feeding purposes, some wandering away a hundred or one hundred and fifty miles. When they return they are always able to detect their own young from amidst the hundreds of thousands of similar young playing together. The seal at birth is about two feet long and weighs ten or a dozen pounds. Their gregarious instinct, which causes the cows to "haul up" in enormous swarms, also brings the pups into regular little gangs: these are technically called *Pods*. So with the bachelor seals which play together in the surf and often seem to amuse themselves by teasing the pups.

The noise made by a seal rookery has been compared to the roar of Niagara; it can be heard above the pounding of the surf. The cows have only one note, like the cry of a calf or old sheep, though if they are suddenly disturbed they spit or snort. But the fighting males utter a sound like a locomotive or roar hoarsely or gurgle or make a chuckling whistle. Mr. Elliott says:—"The sound which arises from these great breeding grounds of the fur seal, where thousands upon ten thousands of angry vigilant bulls are roaring, chuckling and piping, and multitudes of seal mothers are calling in hollow, bleating tones to their young, that in their turn respond incessantly, is simply defiance to verbal description. It is at a slight distance softened into a deep booming, as of a cataract, and I have heard it, with a light fair wind to the leeward, as far as six miles out from land on the sea; and even in the thunder of the surf and the roar of heavy gales it will rise up and over to your ear for quite a considerable distance away."

Mr. Elliott declares that the bachelor seals are the most restless animals in the whole brute creation. They play with each other like frisky puppies. "When weary of this gambolling," he says, "a general disposition to sleep is suddenly manifested, and they stretch themselves out and curl up in all the positions and all the postures that their flexible spines and ball-and-socket joints will permit. They seem to revel in the unwonted vegetation and to be delighted with their

own efforts in rolling down and crushing the tall stalks of the grasses and the umbelliferous plants; one will lie upon its back, hold up its hind flippers and lazily wave them about, while it scratches or rather rubs its ribs with the fore hands alternately, the eyes being tightly closed during the whole performance; the sensation is evidently so luxurious that it does not wish to have any side issue draw off its blissful self-attention."

Of course as swimmers they carry off the palm. There is no truth that the young pups are frequently drowned. The multitudes of dead pups seen floating in the water are either starved to death because the mothers had fallen a prey to the fishermen or they perished through the ravages of a parasitic worm which breeds in the filth of the harems. They take to the water as naturally as any other animal. One of the great sports of the young pups is to roost on rocks awash with the waves, where the surf will sweep them away and where they try to push one another off and get the better places. They dart in the midst of booming breakers and gambol on the very crest of billows that would smash a whale ship. The bachelors in the sheer exultation of their energy often leap completely out of the water like sturgeon. They swim very swiftly, keeping two or three feet under water, propelling themselves by their fore flippers and using their hind ones as guiding oars. They can stay under water a surprisingly long time without breathing.

Mr. Elliott says:—"All their movements in water, whether they are travelling to some objective point or are in sport, are quick and joyous; and nothing is more suggestive of intense satisfaction and pure physical comfort than is that spectacle which we can see every August a short distance out at sea from any rookery, where thousands of old males and females are idly rolling over on the billows side by side, rubbing and scratching with their fore and hind flippers, which are here and there stuck up out of the water by their owners, like the lateen sails of the Mediterranean feluccas, or, when the hind flippers are presented, like a cat-o'-nine tail. They sleep in the water a great



deal, too, more than is generally supposed, showing that they do not come on land to rest."

One of the odd sights of a voyage in the Bering waters is that of a female seal asleep. They turn on their backs, fold their flippers over their breasts and by curving their hind flippers up keep themselves upright like a boat. Their nostrils are so formed that when they have breathed the walls tightly close and keep out the water.

John Burroughs speaking of the seal says:—"Lying there in masses or wriggling about upon the rocks all their lines soft and flowing, their motions hampered, the fur-seals suggested huge larvae, or something between the grub and the water insect. They appeared to be yet in a kind of sack or envelope. The males wriggle about like a man in a bag; but once in the water they are a part of the water, as fleet and nimble as a fish, or as a bird in the air."

The gregarious instincts of the seal make the labor of driving them comparatively slight. A few men can keep the herd in motion. When the time arrives the whole population of the village turns out to take part. Two men stationing themselves at opposite sides of the herd will segregate twenty or thirty of the bachelor seals, and, getting behind them and rattling bones and shouting, drive them away from the hauling ground. The young animals when driven are as docile and amiable as a flock of sheep. When they reach the killing ground, which is perhaps two or three miles distant, they are allowed to rest themselves and cool off. Then half a dozen or more experienced men armed with ash or hickory sticks bound with sheet iron, called mamlika, and made in New London, Connecticut, club the seals, one blow being generally sufficient to stun the animal. The clubbed seal is then dragged into a line and stabbed to the heart. The skimmers come along and strip off the hide, spreading it evenly on the grass, flesh side down. The women take the carcass and remove such portions of the blubber of fat as they want. The meat they dry and pack into the dried stomach of the sealion for future consumption.

In the old days it was permitted by law to take a hundred thousand

seals from the Pribilof; the work of slaughtering and skinning that number was accomplished in forty days. Elliott says:—

“ The labor of skinning is excessively severe, and is trying even to an expert, demanding long practice ere the muscles of the back and thighs are so developed as to permit a man to bend down and finish well a fair day’s work. The knives used by the natives for skinning are ordinary kitchen or case-handled butcher knives. They are sharpened to cutting edges as keen as razors, but something about the skin of the seal, perhaps fine comminuted sand along the abdomen, so dulls these knives as the natives work that they are constantly obliged to whet them.

“ The body of the seal, preparatory to skinning, is rolled over and balanced squarely on its back. Then the native makes a single swift cut through the skin down along the neck, chest, and belly, from the lower jaw to the root of the tail, using for this purpose his long stabbing knife. The fore and hind flippers are then successively lifted as the man straddles the seal and stoops down to this work over it, and a sweeping circular incision is made on the skin just at the point where the body fur ends. Then, seizing a flap of the hide on either one side or the other of the abdomen, the man proceeds, with his smaller, shorter butcher knife, rapidly to cut the skin clean and free from the body and blubber, which he rolls over and out from the hide by hauling up on it as he advances with his work, standing all this time stooped over the carcass, so that his hands are but slightly above it or the ground. This operation of skinning a fair-sized ‘ holluschak ’ [kholostyák] takes the best men only one minute and a half; but the average time made by the gang on the ground is about four minutes to the seal.”

Although the odor of the seal blubber is peculiarly offensive to sensitive nostrils, the meat of the seal is quite appetizing if properly prepared.

In the old days the skins were air dried, a method which was not always effective. It is said that in 1803 seven hundred and fifty thousand of such skins, accumulated at Sitka, rotted and had to be thrown

away. They are now taken immediately to the salt-house where they are piled up in "kenches" or bins with a profusion of salt spread on the flesh side. When they are sufficiently pickled they are tied up in twos, the hair side out, and are ready for shipment. Most of them are sent to London in hogsheads containing from twenty to forty. There by a secret process they are fashioned into the beautiful fur which my lady wears, in the form of a thousand dollar coat, generally to the detriment of her health.

The seal-killing takes place in June and July. By the end of October the rookeries begin to look deserted, though some old seals remain in the vicinity very late or even all winter. The females strike directly south and appear on the coast of Southern California so speedily that it is believed they make no stop on the way. Their return on the other hand is slow as they are then heavy with young. President Jordan says:—

"The herd as a whole takes a direct course through the Pacific Ocean obliquely to the coast of California. It is probable that the adult males go no farther south than the latitude of Cape Flattery; but the adult females are taken off the coast of Southern California within two weeks after their departure from the islands, and hence their course must be direct and rapid. On their return they move slowly back to the American coast, reaching the passes about the first of June, whither they have already been preceded by the adult males and older bachelors."

Another of the interesting pinniped inhabitants of the Pribilof Islands is the sea-lion. It has an imposing presence and a sonorous voice, which, when put forth at full capacity of its lungs will drown the booming of the surf. It is much larger than the fur-seal, attaining a length of ten or twelve feet and huge girth around the shoulders. It is often seen rearing its mighty hulk on some rock just above the sea, and with its tawny chest and grizzly mane, its gleaming ugly teeth and sinister mouth guarded by gristly lips, it is a fierce and awe-inspiring creature. Mr. Elliott witnessed a battle between two old males. He says:—

“ No animals that I have ever seen in combat presented a more savage or a more cruelly fascinating sight than did a brace of old sea-lion bulls which met under my eyes near the Garden Cove at St. George. Here was a sea-lion rookery, the outskirts of which I had trodden upon for the first time. These old males, surrounded by their meek polygamous families, were impelled toward each other by those latent fires of hate and jealousy which seemed to burst forth and fairly consume the angry rivals. Opening with a long, round vocal prelude, they gradually came together, as the fur-seals do, with averted heads, as if the sight of each other was sickening — but fight they must. One would play against the other for an unguarded moment in which to assume the initiative, until it had struck its fangs into the thick skin of its opponent’s jowl; then, clenching its jaws, was not shaken off until the struggles of its tortured victim literally tore them out, leaving an ugly gaping wound — for the sharp eye-teeth cut a deeper gutter in the skin and flesh than would have held my hand. Fired into an almost supernatural rage, the injured lion retaliated quick as a flash, in kind; the hair flew from both of them into the air, the blood streamed down in frothy torrents, while high above the boom of the breaking waves and shrill, deafening screams of waterfowl overhead rose the ferocious, hoarse and desperate roar of the combatants.”

Courageous as they are when fighting among themselves, Steller says the males take flight on the first appearance of man, and if surprised in their sleep, are panic struck, sighing deeply, and in their attempt to escape get quite confused, tumble down and tremble so much that they are scarcely able to move their limbs. The full grown adult weighs more than half a ton; as is the case with the seals, the females are much smaller, generally not half the size.

The harems of the sea-lion are organized very much like their smaller cousins. Each bull has from fifteen to twenty cows and aggregating in a single rookery from five to ten thousand. They are the most restless of creatures, “ ever twisting and turning, coiling and uncoiling themselves over the rocks, now stretched out prone in slumber, the

next minute up and moving; the roar of one is instantly caught up by another, so that the aggregate sound as it rises and falls from this rookery can only be compared to the hoarse sound of a tempest as it howls through the rigging of a ship " or " roaring in an incessant concert, making an orchestra to which those deep, sonorous tones in the great Mormon tabernacle at Salt Lake City constitute the fittest and most adequate resemblance."

The fur of the sea-lion is valueless commercially, but the natives make great use of the hide and indeed of the whole animal. They take advantage of a night when the moon is partially obscured and crawl along between the sentinels and the sea. Then at a given signal they all leap to their feet making the greatest possible din with shouts and yells and the discharge of pistols. The sea-lions frightened out of their sleep, start off in the direction in which they happen to be lying. A few jump over the cliff, others charge for the higher land where, being guided by the prodding natives, they are corraled in a circular cage made of stakes adorned with fluttering flags and stuck into the ground ten or twenty feet apart and connected by strips of cotton cloth and a thong of hide. This almost imaginary prison serves to keep them; they make no attempt to escape. When a herd or pod of two or three hundred have been thus captured they are driven to their destination, which may be ten or eleven miles away, the process taking from five days to three weeks, the natives allowing them to rest from time to time, and then stimulating them again to action by clapping boards and bones, rapping sticks on the rocks, firing fuses and waving flags or cotton umbrellas. The killing of the old bulls is done with a rifle-shot, fired between the eye and the ear. The cows are speared.

When the skins have been unhaired by sweating they are sewed together and stretched over a light frame-work, and this constitutes the native kyak or bidarka. The intestine pulled out to its full length of sixty feet or more is made into the water-tight *kamlaika*, the most useful garment they possess. The throats are made into boot-tops,

the flippers into soles. The meat of the young sea-lion tastes like veal. The tough whiskers are greatly prized by the Chinese, who use them as pickers for their opium pipes.

When the Russians first took possession of the Pribilof Islands they were the resort of multitudes of walrus; now their haunt is on the small island already described. Gesner, in 1558, declared that the fish called *Rosmarii* or *Morsii* had heads fashioned like an ox and "a hairy skin, the hair growing as thick as straw or corn-reeds, that lie loose very largely." He says:—"They will raise themselves with their teeth, as by ladders, to the very tops of rocks that they may feed upon the dewie grasse, or fresh water, and roll themselves in it, and go then to the sea again, unless in the meantime they fall very fast asleep, and rest upon the rocks, for then the fishermen make all the haste they can, and begin at the tail, and part the skin from the fat; and into this that is parted they put most strong cords, and fasten them on the rugged rocks or trees that are near, and then they throw stones at his head, out of a sling, to raise him, and they compel him to descend spoiled of the greatest part of his skin which is fastened to the ropes; he being thereby debilitated, fearful and half dead, is made a rich prey, especially for his teeth which are very precious among the Scythians, the Muscovites, Russians and Tartars (as ivory amongst the Indians) by reason of their harness, whitenesse and ponderousnesse."

James Cartier in 1534 mentioned having met "very greate beastes as greate as oxen, which have two great teeth in their mouths like unto elephants and live also in the sea." Captain Cook gave a vivid description of the Pacific walrus as he saw the creature in its pristine abundance:—

"They lie in herds of many hundreds upon the ice, huddling one over the other like swine, and roar or bay very loud, so that in the night or in foggy weather they gave us notice of the vicinity of the ice before we could see it. We never found the whole herd asleep, some being always on the watch. These, on the approach of the boat, would wake those next to them, and the alarm being thus gradually communicated,

the whole herd would be awake presently. But they were seldom in a hurry to get away till after they had once been fired at, when they would tumble one over the other into the sea in the utmost confusion, and if we did not at the first discharge kill those we fired at we generally lost them, though mortally wounded. They did not appear to be that dangerous animal some authors have described, not even when attacked. They are rather more so in appearance than in reality.

“ Vast number of them would follow, and some come close up to the boats, but the flash of a musket in the pan, or even the bare pointing of one at them, would send them down in an instant.”

They seem to be more awkward and clumsy, both on land and in the water, as well as more slothful than the seals and sea-lions. The young are hairy, but the old ones have a skin covered with warts or pimples, wrinkled and flabby and utterly disgusting. On the land it is almost helpless because of its bulk — some of them are twelve feet long and weigh almost a ton — contrasted with its ineffectual limbs. It swims under water; when it comes to the surface it blows like a whale. It is not true that it uses its tusks as landing hooks! Like the seal and sea-lion its vision is feeble but its sense of hearing acute. The hide is very thick, in some places three inches. It feeds on crustaceans in contradistinction to the seal, in whose stomach no shell fish is said ever to have been found, and the long white tusks are supposed to be used for digging clams in the estuaries of the North. The walrus is said by the natives to be monogamous; the mother is so strongly attached to her young that she will defend it with her life — in strong contrast to the carelessness of the seal which never lavishes any affection or very little care on the pup. The Eskimos used to kill an average of ten thousand a year up to 1867, and as their habitat is near the shallow shore where fishing fleets can not easily reach them there is no great likelihood of the natives ever being deprived of this valuable source of livelihood. “ The walrus to the Eskimo,” says Elliott, “ answers just as the cocoa palm does to the South Sea islander; it feeds him, it clothes him, it heats and illuminates his ‘ igloo,’ and it arms

him for the chase, while he builds his summer shelter and rides upon the sea by virtue of its hide."

Elliott who tasted walrus meat on St. Lawrence Island declares it was worse than beaver's tail, or tough brown bear steak, in fact worse than any flesh he had ever eaten:—"It has a strong flavor of an indefinite acrid nature, which turned my palate and my stomach instantaneously and simultaneously, while the surprised natives stared in bewildered silence at their astonished and disgusted guest. They, however, put chunks two inches square, and even larger, of this flesh and blubber into their mouths as rapidly as the storage room there would permit—and with what grimy gusto—the corners of their large lips dripping with the fatness of their feeding! How little they thought then that in a few short seasons they would die of starvation sitting in those same 'igloos'—their caches empty and nothing but endless fields of barren ice where the life-giving sea should be. The winter of 1879-80 was one of exceptional rigor in the Arctic, although in the United States it was unusually mild and open. The ice closed in solid around St. Lawrence Island—so firm and unshaken by the giant leverage of wind and tide that the walruses were driven far to the southward and eastward beyond the reach of the unhappy inhabitants of that island, who, thus unexpectedly deprived of their mainstay and support, seem to have miserably starved to death, with the exception of one small village on the north shore." In 1907 only nineteen walrus hides were shipped out of Alaska.

The inhabitants of the Pribilof are Aleutians who were colonized there by the Russian fur-company and have ever since maintained a monopoly of killing and treating the seals. When they came into the hands of the United States the successors of the Russian Company, the so-called Alaska Commercial Company, pursued the same policy toward the natives, but seem to have treated the natives more generously. In 1874 they paid the inhabitants forty cents a skin for taking and curing and in addition forty cents apiece for sea-lion skins, ten cents for their throats and five dollars a barrel for their intestines.



They also furnished the natives with comfortable houses, with school instruction and medical attendance. Their earnings were so large as to make them the most prosperous of all the Aleutians, though as their work all came concentrated in two months and the rest of the year was practically spent in idleness, they vegetated, mentally and physically, but as they cannot get liquor and are essentially law-abiding they are not unhappy. Card-playing, tea-drinking, attendance at the Russian church which is still maintained, the playing of musical instruments, and sleeping, were their chief occupation. Since the diminution of the rookeries and the reduction of the annual killing from a hundred thousand to only a few thousand they have suffered from actual poverty and the United States is likely to be called upon to support them.

Small and insignificant as are the Pribilof Islands in comparison with the rest of Alaska they certainly by reason of their inhabitants, marine and feathered, as well as human, and the enormous interests concentrated there, yield in no respect to any place in that whole vast territory.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### SITKA.

**S**INCE we are travelling by imagination we may have any kind of a conveyance and we may instantly transport ourselves back to Juneau and take another trip along the coast. This time we shall stop at Sitka, situated on the southwesterly side of Baránof Island, and about a hundred miles in a straight line from Juneau. It is reached by the inland passage and is enchantingly situated against a background of beautiful wooded mountains with its harbor gleaming blue and purple amid a multitude of lovely islands. As the tourist approaches the town by either of the three possible passages, threading these beautiful passages around rugged points, the eye catches sight of the Russo-Greek cathedral church of St. Michael, sacred to the memory of the saintly Veniaminof. It stands in full sight from the sea and seems to give promise of a foreign city — with its green roof, its big clock, its peculiar balloon-shaped spire surmounted by the Greek cross, and its octagonal belfry with the six bells sent from Moscow hanging each in its arch.

On landing one is faced by the old Russian storehouse, an enormous log structure which stands between the wharf and the town. Along the interminable passage and at both ends squat the gray-blanketed Indian women offering all sorts of trinkets and curios. Some are beautiful and artistic, others are simply barbarous and crude. There are baskets brought from far Attu, a thousand miles to the westward where West has become East, great horn spoons carved by the Haidas from the antlers of mountain sheep or goats; gaudy bead moccasins, gayly painted cedar or pine canoes and paddles, miniature totem-poles, carved out of wood or jade, wooden lamps inlaid with shells and made

to look like prehistoric beasts, all sorts of silver adornments, especially the Alaska totem-spoon designed by Lieutenant Schwatka and made by native jewellers, Chilkat blankets, carved and polished gambling implements and ancestral weapons. They are shrewd dealers and the stranger is quite likely to be well taken in.

It is only a few steps from the wharf to the Russian church, and having paid the admission fee of fifty cents one is allowed to see its treasures:— the ikonostás adorned with its sacred pictures or images in costly frames of chased silver and gold. Above the magnificent central gate made of elaborate bronze is a beautifully painted representation of the Ascension which was formerly in the Lutheran church built in 1840, but now torn down. The ikon of the patron saint was rescued from a Russian vessel wrecked just at the entrance of Sitka harbor. The vestments used by the clergy, many of them woven brocades of gold and silver, the gifts of old Baránof, are well worth inspecting. The ikon exhibited in the chapel dedicated to "our Lady of Kazan" is studded with jewels. An offer of fifteen thousand dollars has been refused for it. There are also fine baptismal bowls and ornate crowns used for weddings, censers of beautifully modelled silver, missals with jewelled and enamelled covers. The Bible had silver covers weighing twenty-seven pounds. It was stolen by discharged United States soldiers together with other valuables, a part of which were afterwards recovered badly mutilated. The chapel of St. Mary is used for winter services: it is rendered notable by a wonderful ikon representing the Madonna and Child.

At the building occupied by the Russian Orthodox Mission may be seen interesting relics, Bishop Veniaminof's clock, his writing-desk, which he made with his own hands, and a beautiful ikon presented by the Princess Potemkin. Other buildings belonging to the Church are on the north side of the cathedral. On the south side is a ponderous log building occupied now as a general storehouse but formerly the head-offices of the Russian-American Fur Company. How many millions' worth of precious furs have been stored there in the palmy days

of that industry! A building at the corner of quadrangle was used successively as the club of the Russian officers and then for a similar purpose by the United States garrison.

There is a museum of Alaskan curiosities founded by Mr. Sheldon Jackson. The fees for admission help support it.

Before the days of the California gold-fever, the Sitka ship-yards and foundries were busy places, being the only industries of that sort on the Pacific coast. Many of the bells of the California missions were cast there. Here was built the famous pug-nosed side-wheeler, the *Politkovsky*, of solid cedar planking four inches thick hewed from immense logs and fastened with copper spikes beaten from virgin placer metal. She carried fourteen iron and two brass cannon and copper boilers three-fourths of an inch thick. The final ceremonies of the transfer of Alaska were consummated on board of the *Politkovsky* amid the impressive chanting and intoning of the Russian clergy dressed in their most gorgeous robes. Her brass cannon fired the last salute and the enormous dark bronze whistle, for years the largest on the Pacific coast, which is still preserved as a sacred relic, blew a long drawn blast. It was on exhibition at the Seattle exposition. This historic ship, passing through various hands and vicissitudes, but always in Alaskan waters, was finally wrecked in 1908 while doing service as a lighter.

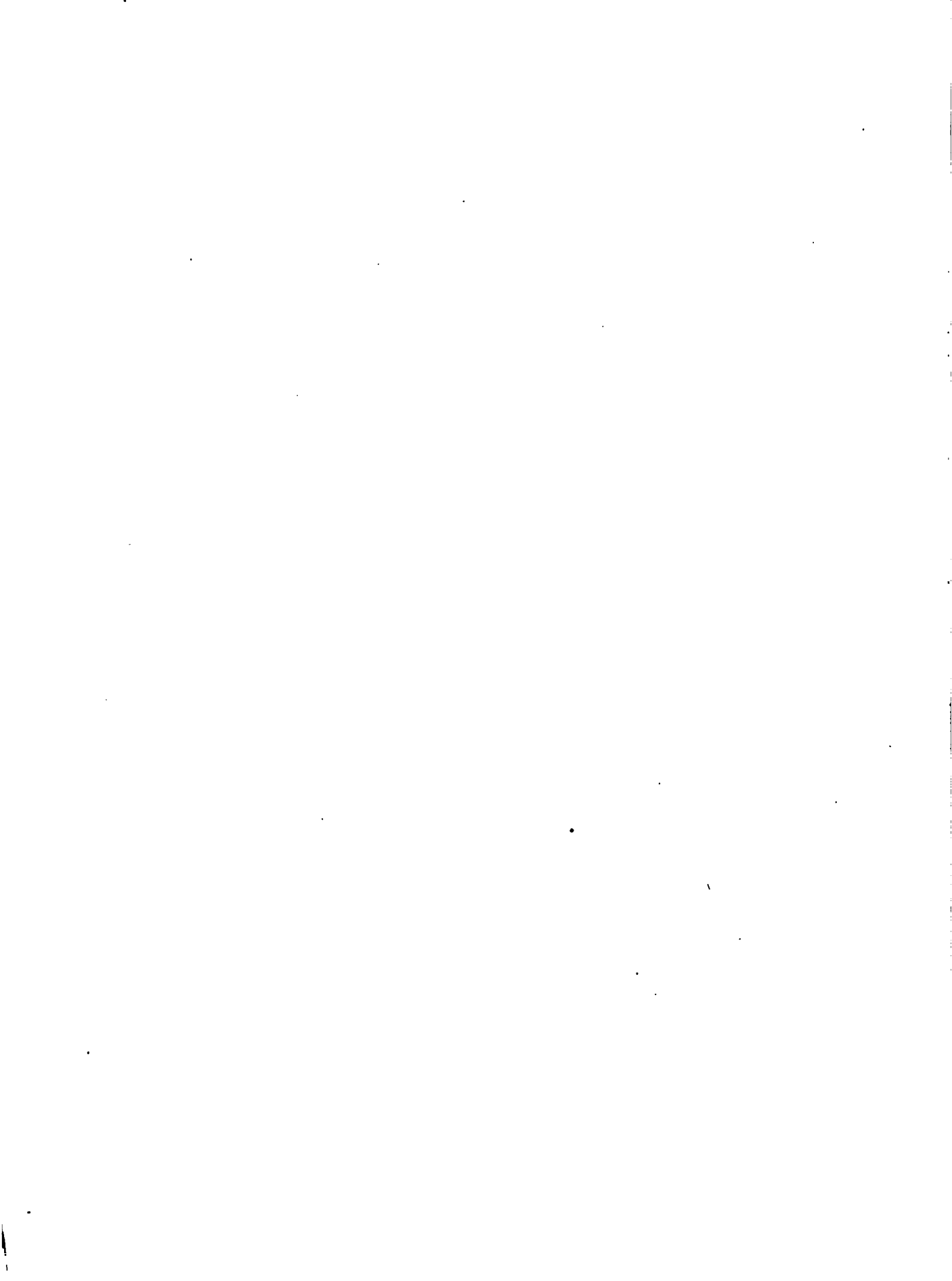
The rocky promontory where Baránof had his clash with the Thlinkits is now occupied by the home of the director of the government agricultural department. It is reached by a long flight of wooden steps. On the hill is the Russian cemetery overlooking Swan Lake. Here are buried many pioneers. What life-tragedies here came to the same peaceful ending! In one corner rests the remains of Prince Matsukof's English wife, whose hospitalities were enjoyed by many American and English visitors.

By an executive proclamation in 1890 a strip of land five hundred feet wide on the right bank and two hundred and fifty feet wide on the left bank of the Indian River, called by the Russians the Kolosh-

chinkaya Retcha, has been forever reserved as a park. It extends from the picturesque falls to the mouth of the river. This and the public garden back of the cathedral and parade-ground sloping to the water give Sitka abundant outing-places. The park is universally admired. It abounds in splendid cedars, and other great Alaskan trees; near the falls formerly stood a cedar which was ten feet in diameter. There are thickets of salmon-berry and other delicious fruit bushes; the devil's club here attains a height of twenty feet; in the summer multitudes of beautiful flowers fill the air with fragrance. Enchanting paths, admirably kept, lead down to the river, and when one reaches the beach one suddenly comes upon a small grove of totems erected amid the green spruce trees. Here are the graves of Lisiansky's men who were murdered by the Indians in 1804. Baránof's favorite seat on the great stone near the beach is still pointed out. It is called the Blarney stone and people who kiss it are supposed to be granted persuasive eloquence. There is a Russian inscription carved upon it and many names of visiting ships have been there recorded. If stones had the eloquence ascribed to them by Shakespeare what fascinating tales that great boulder could relate of days long past!

Although Sitka has lost its importance since the seat of government was transferred to Juneau, it is still the most interesting town in Alaska and is fairly prosperous, though curiously enough its name is not given in the Governor's report for 1908 among the incorporated towns, and not a vessel of noticeable tonnage either entered or cleared in its harbor during the two years previous. In 1908 there were sixty pupils in the Sitkan schools. One of the most useful of these institutions is the Industrial Training School, which was founded by the Missionary-Governor, John G. Brady, a third of a century ago. Both boys and girls of native stock attend and are educated to become self-supporting; the boys learn boat-building, carpentry, rope-making, agriculture and other useful trades. The girls are taught cooking, sewing, laundry-work and the like. The language spoken is English.

Though the climate of Sitka is mild and very equable, there is a great





DAWSON, PANORAMIC VIEW.

rainfall and the paucity of sunny days in summer tends to check the ripening of vegetables. Nevertheless, cabbage and cauliflower, potatoes and the common " garden truck " generally do well. Mr. Brady in 1878 declared that probably there was not another spot on the globe where the same number of people did so little manual labor and were so well-fed as at Sitka. He pointed out that the Sitkan natives had good minds and were susceptible of a high state of culture. The pure Thlinkits formerly looked down upon the Sitkan Indians, who were of mixed stock. The Indian village has been of late years greatly transformed and as long ago as 1892 every one of the great communal lodges had been destroyed. The population is now comparatively small. The name Sitka is said to mean mountain-village and certainly that is appropriate. Mr. George Broke declares the view from the Sitka citadel somewhat resembles that of the Bay of Naples, but with the additional charm of snow mountains and small glaciers.

An interesting excursion from Sitka is to follow the old trail to the summit of Verstovoi, which from its height of three thousand two hundred and sixteen feet affords a magnificent view of the islands toward the Pacific, of the Baránof Mountains, Silver Bay, Sitka and even Mt. Fairweather, one hundred miles away. Above eight hundred feet the view is unobstructed by underbrush. The name Arrow Head, which is sometimes applied to the mountain, arises from a peculiar triangle of rock which lies on one side.

From that height one can get an idea of the variety of excursions possible from Sitka among the harbor islands. Opposite the Indian village is Japonsky, which is about a mile long and half a mile wide and originally the site of a large native village. Here in 1805 a Japanese junk was wrecked and hence the name. It is now used for coal-sheds and a powder magazine. Harbor Island is south of Japonsky and contains a number of Indian caches. On one side of the ship channel is Kutkan, where lived an Indian chief who related to Bishop Veniaminof many of the myths and legends which he chronicled.

Signal Island was utilized in Baránof's time for establishing the



lighted bonfires announcing the arrival of a ship as a guidance for the pilot. The ship arriving would fire a gun and then would flash out the signals, answered by a bonfire on the citadel roof.

On the east side of Baránof Island are situated the White Sulphur Hot Springs, of which there are four, and it is an all day's canoe trip to go and return. The canoe threads its way through fascinating intricate passages. The water is impregnated with sulphur, chloride of iron and magnesia — not to say with heat! An egg may be boiled in the largest of the springs, which has a temperature of one hundred and fifty-five degrees. A second spring has a temperature of one hundred and twenty-two. The Indians knew of the virtues of these fountains and used to go there and soak for hours at a time in the water; the bay where they are situated was neutral ground. Lisiansky discovered them in 1805. Sir George Simpson visited them in 1842. In 1852 the natives, resenting the possession of the springs by any one, their own unwritten law forbidding settlements or claims, burnt all the buildings and drove the inmates into the woods. The invalids thus routed out in the middle of winter managed to cross the mountains to Sitka in safety. After the United States Government took possession there was a stockaded post with hospital, chapel, residences, and gardens. The vegetation there is of exceptional luxuriance. After the withdrawal of the troops the natives again burnt the settlement. The baths are now come into possession of private persons and are accordingly exploited instead of being reserved for public use as should have been the case.

The mountains behind the bay are full of wild game — black-tailed bears and deer, and the streams abound in trout. The hunter is in turn hunted by the ever-ferocious mosquito, whose assaults justify the Thlinkit legend that it was originally a giant spider, which, when caught by an evil spirit and flung into the fire, escaped, though shrivelled in size, bearing in its mouth a coal to torment mankind with.

From the Hot Springs hillside is obtained a magnificent view of the volcanic Mount Edgecumbe. Mount Edgecumbe, called by the natives

Thugh or the Sleeper, is situated in Kruzof Island. It was first called San Jacinto or St. Hyacinth, but Cook renamed it. Crossing waters often rough and foggy one lands on the farther side of Sitka Sound, and then has a tramp through swamps and forest land for several miles to the base of the mountain. Two Kadiak hunters climbed it in 1804 and reported the crater filled with water. It is said to have been in eruption during that year. Since then it has been climbed many times, more than once by women. Steam and the smell of sulphur show that fires are not far below. On the Camel's Hump, of which Edgecumbe is only a parasitic cone, is a still larger crater, from the mouth of which not so many centuries ago poured the lavas which formed the island. Edgecumbe was the home of the famed Thunder Bird.

The voyage from Juneau or Sitka northwest to Prince William Sound is in some respects the crowning experience of Alaskan travel. From Juneau one passes the famous Glacier Bay which was for years the cynosure of all eyes. Into it poured nine living glaciers, of which the one named after Dr. John Muir and poetically described by him, was the greatest and most typical. It was about three miles wide and three hundred feet high, sweeping down from mountains rising to a height of fifteen thousand feet. The face of the glacier in the sun had the color of aquamarine and from its multitudinous crystal pinnacles were reflected all the hues of the rainbow. As the glacier moved seaward at the rate of more than sixty feet a day, from time to time enormous icebergs fell off into the water with a thundering crash which went echoing from one side of the bay to the other. Early in 1890 a great earthquake occurred, shattering its crystalline front and so choking the whole bay with its débris that no ship could approach within fifteen miles. In the year 1908 it was found to be once more accessible and since then steamships have approached as formerly. When Miss Scidmore saw it for the last time she said:—“The whole brow was transfigured with the fires of sunset; the blue and silvery pinnacles, the white and shining front floating dreamlike on a roseate and amber

sea, and the range and circle of dull violet mountains lifting their glowing summits into a sky flecked with crimson and gold."

But the glaciers in this bay, enormous and wonderful as they are, do not begin to exhaust the possibilities of the phenomena in marvelous Alaska. There are no less than one hundred and seventy that are important enough to be named, and it is estimated that nine-tenths of the ice of this continent is contained in the region extending north to the Wrangel Range and west to the Kenai Peninsula, an area of fifty thousand square miles. Beginning at the Cross Sound, which separates Chitchof Island from the mainland, begins the stupendous Coast Range of mountains from which most of these glaciers descend. Above Icy Point La Pérouse rises to a height of ten thousand seven hundred and forty feet. Then comes Lituya, whose dazzling top looks down from a height of eleven thousand eight hundred and thirty-two feet on the only bay on that long stretch of coast. Even that has a dangerous entrance as the tide sweeps in with a swift bore. Here in 1786 the French navigator lost two boat-loads of men, twenty-one in all, who were overturned in the icy waters and drowned. He erected a monument to their memory on a small island called Ile de Cénotaphe. Their names were enrolled and buried in a bottle with an account of the disaster. La Pérouse described the inhabitants of Lituya Bay as treacherous and thievish. They were crazy to obtain iron and were willing to barter furs and fish for the precious metal. He was scandalized at the filthy habits of the natives and especially disgusted at the ugliness of the women, enhanced by their mutilating themselves with labrets.

When Captain Dixon, whose harbor lies to the south of Icy Cape, was there a year later he did not find the women so very terrible. He gives a pleasant description of them and tells how he persuaded one of them to wash the paint from her face. He says that then "her countenance had all the cheerful glow of an English milkmaid's; and the healthy red which suffused her cheeks was even beautifully contrasted with the white of her neck; her eyes were black and sparkling;

her eyebrows of the same color and most beautifully arched; her forehead so remarkably clear that the translucent veins were seen meandering even in their minutest branches — in short she would be considered handsome even in England.”

La Pérouse himself was upset in the bay by the tidal wave from an iceberg falling into the water. All the navigators who have visited the bay have remarked on the wonders of the glaciers, of which there are at least five active ones. Dr. Dall described the bay as “a sort of Yosemite Valley, retaining the glaciers and with its floor submerged six or eight hundred feet.” The natives have a legend to the effect that two men in the shape of bears sit on either side of the entrance holding a sail cloth just below the surface and when a canoeman appears toss him furiously into the air. About forty miles beyond Lituya Bay is Dry Bay, the shallow delta of the Alsek River, which rises near the source of the Chilkat and flows in a precipitous course behind Mt. Fairweather, crowded with salmon. It has been explored from mouth to source. Lieutenant Emmons made the crossing from bay to bay on land. Mt. Fairweather rises as it were perpendicularly from the sea to a height of fifteen thousand two hundred and ninety-two feet.

The next indentation is Yakutat Bay, two hundred and fifteen miles from Sitka. Cook and Vancouver called it Bering Bay; Dixon dubbed it Admiralty Bay and La Pérouse affixed to it the name of Monti. Fortunately the native name has been preserved. There are a number of islands on the eastern shore of the bay but the mouth is unobstructed and the full force of the Pacific, here hardly deserving of that name, is likely to sweep into it, rendering entrance difficult and dangerous, especially as it is likely to be more or less blocked by floating ice. At Port Mulgrave there is a good harbor with a Moravian Mission supported by the Swedish Lutheran Church. Here Baránof endeavored to establish a convict colony. Shelikof, at whose instance he landed there, gave him some admirable instructions. He said:—“Use taste as well as practical judgment in locating the settlement. Look to beauty as well as to convenience of material and supplies. On the plan, as

well as in reality, leave room for spacious squares for public assemblies. Make the streets not too long, but wide, and let them radiate from the squares. If the site is wooded, let trees enough stand to line the streets and to fill the gardens, in order to beautify the place and preserve a healthy atmosphere. Build the houses along the streets, but at some distance from one another, in order to increase the extent of the town. The roofs should be of equal height, and the architecture as uniform as possible. The gardens should be of equal size and provided with good fences along the streets."

A post and fortifications were erected and several ships were built, but the farming industry, which it was hoped to establish, was hardly suited to that locality. Many of the settlers died and the rest were massacred by the Thlinkits in 1805. In the old days, when there were a greater number of Indians, they used to come out in canoes, singing, and paddle ceremoniously round any visiting ship. They would bring their wares to exchange for articles of iron and for white men's apparel.

Gold was discovered along the beaches of Yakutat Bay in 1880 and the miners for a time were able to extract as much as forty dollars a day by the use of rotary hand amalgamators. But a big storm piled the beaches with dog-fish which decayed and soaked the sand with oil so that the mercury would not act. A tidal wave washed out a large part of the black sand and little has been done there since. The chief of the Yakutat Indians made the miners pay him tribute. The black sand contained platinum as well as gold. Good coal occurs a mile or two inland but it has not as yet been exploited owing to the difficulty of reaching it.

At the head of Yakutat Bay, which penetrates the land for sixty miles, there is a smaller bay, named by the Italian navigator Malaspina Disenchantment Bay. He supposed that tide water ended there. Since then it has been explored for sixty miles farther and found almost to reach the sea again toward the south. To the north of Disenchantment Bay lie the two glaciers, Dalton and Hubbard. The fjord running south

among lofty mountains is regarded by those who have seen it — and they are few — as offering the most magnificent scenery on the coast. Lofty mountains rise on both sides and cascades come dashing down their precipitous cliffs.

Mr. Muir writes of the scenery there that it is “ gloriously wild and sublime, majestic mountains and glaciers, barren moraines, bloom-covered islands amid icy, swirling waters, enlivened by screaming gulls, hair-seals and roaring bergs. On the other hand, the beauty of the southern extension of the bay is tranquil and restful and perfectly enchanting. Its shores, especially on the east side, are flowery and finely sculptured, and the mountains, of moderate height, are charmingly combined and reflected in the quiet waters.”

The town of Yakutat has been rendered prosperous by the lumber trade. A railway climbs up into the interior for several miles. On the wharf are a saw mill and cannery. On the plateau above are stores and a few residences. Not far away is the village inhabited by the Thlinkits. There is a forest walk to the old Thlinkit village where the natives weave their beautiful baskets and carve their curious trinkets which they offer to the interested tourist. They still keep up their reputation as light-fingered gentry which Puget discovered to his cost a hundred years ago.

On the north side of the bay begins the greatest known glacier of the world, the Malaspina. It is not less than sixty miles in length and extends back into the country fully twenty miles. Most of the way it is separated from the sea by a forested moraine six miles in width. It pours over into the waves at Icy Cape. All day long as the steamer ploughs to the northwest one sees floating above the wonderful sweep of the dazzling glacier the cloudlike heights of the mountains — Cook, thirteen thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven feet high, and Mt. St. Elias, which the United States Coast Survey reckoned to be more than nineteen thousand feet high but has since been found to be a thousand feet lower than that. It is visible one hundred and fifty miles out at sea. It is the dominating peak of the range and gives its name to it, though

Logan, which can not be seen from the sea, is fifteen hundred feet higher. Professor I. C. Russell, who was sent by the National Geographic Society to explore it, and who reached an elevation of fourteen thousand five hundred feet, says of the peak which Bering called the *bolshaya shapka* or great cap: "At length the great pyramid forming the culminating point of all the region burst into full view. What a glorious sight! The great mountain seemed higher and grander and more regularly proportioned than any peak I had ever beheld before. The white plain formed by the Seward Glacier made an even foreground, which gave distance to the foothills forming the western margin of the glacier. Far above the angular crest of the Samovar Hills in the middle distance towered St. Elias, sharp and clear against the evening sky. So majestic was St. Elias that other magnificent peaks scarcely received a second glance."

Mrs. Higginson says:— "For one whole day the majestic mountain and its beautiful companion peaks were in sight of the steamer before the next range came into view. The sea breaks sheer upon the ice-palisades of the glacier. Icebergs, pale green, pale blue, and rose-colored, march out to meet, and bowing, pass the ship. . . . On one side are miles and miles of violet ocean sweeping away into limitless space, a fleck of sunlight flashing like a firefly in every hollowed wave; on the other, miles on miles of glistening ice, crowned by peaks of softest snow. At sunset warm purple mists drift in and settle over the glacier; above these float banks of deepest rose; through both, and above them, glimmer the mountains pearly, in a remote loveliness that seems not of earth."

In the St. Elias group there are nine mountains, the altitude of which exceed ten thousand feet—magnificent giant brothers of the North, offering the mountain climber opportunities enough to display skill and courage.

It was nearly a century and a half after Bering discovered Mt. St. Elias, before any attempt was made to ascend it. Frederick Schwatka and a party supported by the *New York Times*, tried it in 1886 but

failed to reach the base. In 1888 a party of four, three Englishmen and an American, attained an altitude of eleven thousand four hundred feet. In 1890 I. C. Russell and Mark B. Karr would have reached the top had it not been for a severe storm. Russell reached an altitude of fourteen thousand five hundred feet. In 1897 the Duke of the Abruzzi with a berg expedition succeeded in attaining the summit. This was determined by the Coast Survey as eighteen thousand and twenty-four feet. The chief difficulty consists in the great distance from any source of supplies. From St. Elias the boundary line of Alaska runs due north to Demarcation Point on the Arctic Ocean.

At the entrance of Controller Bay, across from Cape Suckling, is the large Island of Kayak, which is notable for the splendid headland called Cape St. Elias, which juts out into the stormy waters of the Pacific and is beaten by terrific surf. The town of Kayak is on Wingham Island, where Bering landed in 1741, and which was named Kaye Island by Cook thirty-seven years later. This was in honor of an otherwise unknown clergyman who happened to have given Captain Cook two silver coins buried in a bottle containing the date of the discovery and the names of his ships.

Controller is notable for its oil wells, which have been bored here and there over a distance of two or three thousand square miles. Katalla, on the mainland at the head of the bay, sprang into sudden importance, and most of the business of Kayak was transferred to the mushroom town. It was founded in 1904 and immediately became the terminus of a proposed railway. Unfortunately Katalla had no good harbor, only an open roadstead, and on many occasions visiting steamships had been unable to land their freight and passengers. The story is told of a portable bank that was brought there three times and had finally to be transported back to Seattle. Beyond the delta mouth of the great Copper River, across the peninsula, on the shore of Prince William Sound lies the new town of Cordova, which has a good harbor.

It was a question for a time which would be the terminus of the railway communicating with the rich regions of the upper Copper Valley.



Rival companies engaged in almost mediæval warfare. Rights of way crossed, and tracks were laid by one company only to be torn up by the other. Fortifications were thrown up and armed men were stationed ready to fight with their lives. In the same way the right of way through the narrow Keystone Cañon was assailed and defended. A pitched battle took place; one man was killed and three were wounded. Both companies were backed by millions and the interests were enormous.

The distance from Katalla to Cordova in a straight line is only about fifty miles, around by sea it is three times as far. Between them flows the Copper River. It was called Atnah by the natives, who prevented Serebrennikof from exploring its recesses and killed him and his men. It was first successfully ascended by Lieutenant H. T. Allen, who, having reached its head waters, crossed the divide and sailed down the Tanana to the Yukon. It is the master river of that region. It rises on the eastern slope of Mt. Wrangel and after flowing north for forty miles turns southwest for fifty miles. At a distance of one hundred and fifty miles it is joined by the Chitina River and having half circled the vast group of mountains dominated by Wrangel it turns to the south and cuts its way through the Chugatch Range and reaches the Pacific one hundred and fifty miles west of St. Elias. The river is a typical glacial stream, very muddy and turbulent, flowing swiftly through tremendous cañons and in places faced by portentous glaciers. The Miles Glacier lifts ice cliffs for six miles just below the Abercrombie Rapids, at the head of which is the terminus of the Copper River Railway. In summer steamboats ply the upper reaches of the Copper River and the Chitina. The whole region is marvellously rich in metals. It is confidently expected that it will rival all others in the production of copper. The Bonanza Mine, which was purchased for seventy-two thousand dollars in 1900, was sold eight years later for more than a million. This is only one of dozens of other claims, all promising enormous returns.

The whole region is wildly mountainous and evidently of volcanic

origin. There are not less than a dozen peaks of twelve thousand feet altitude rising from that one valley. Mr. Robert Dun in the summer of 1908 succeeded in climbing to the top of Mt. Wrangel, "the whitest, widest dome shaped pile on earth." Some of his experiences were blood curdling. Once, at a height of ten thousand one hundred and fifteen feet, as he was trying to get some photographs, he slumped through the snow into a crevasse. "Legs and body," he says, "were dangling into nothingness, elbows spread and clutching on the yielding snow. During that shred of a second's fall, all substance inside my head, all the air outside, thickened into something dense and leaden. All the blood surged outward to surfaces and extremities, but with no flush of warmth. I hung there looking down at the two slithery green walls converging into doom." With the aid of his one companion he managed to wriggle back into safety.

After a desperate climb of four thousand feet more, prodding for every step till their arms ached, they got near the crater. "I crackled over the last snow," he says, "and leaped upon that ash, in that damp and tarnishing breath of the earth's bowels, with a mingled thrill of victory and apprehension that was glorious . . . ran up the ridge of fumaroles and came out. It was two o'clock. Beyond, on the far side, was snow, snow everywhere. A plain, two, three miles across — you could not tell through the refractive haze. The vast dead chasm was filled chuck-a-block, a brimming bowl of ice. Think of it! — thirteen thousand feet and more above the sea, all but tangent to the Arctic Circle, immutable in the swing of seasons — the world knows no desert like it." He thus describes the living crater: —

"A curtain of fog was snatched away. A tooth — a gigantic incisor pointing upward — appeared on the southwest rim of the snow desert. To the right, on a fragment of outer slope, ran black ribs, creeping with slow vapors, downward into the *névé*. But except for this the cone was all an oval of darkness. A great cavity was blazoned there, yawning upward to its tip. Streaked and crumbling cliffs wavered behind the concealing steam. In a momentary stillness of the air the shreds

of vapor thinned and hovered and drooped along the rims. Then they arose at the centre in hairlike spires, as from a simmering vat. Clinkery cave and corrugation sprang forth in horrid reticulation. The *thing* seemed to suspend its breath like a living being."

A storm came on suddenly and they retreated while still they could make out their tracks. After terrible hours, it cleared again and once more they mounted toward the crater. More than once they caved into the "ash-tained and heat-riddled *névé*" to climb out dripping with muddy water that froze instantly. "Thus," he says, "we climbed, slipped back, climbed up that transient traitorous wall, as it bulged out here in a glossy mud spring, there was caverned with unknowable dread; toiled like beings in a tread-mill—one that might explode or crumble in a jiffy into the soul and centre of the earth's secret being; and over us the tented smoke rolling, rolling, all but touched our eyelids."

At last they reached the very top and had forty minutes to see the marvellous panorama, to locate peaks, to take notes and photographs "all in a frenzied rush." This was a bit of the view:—

"A dappled floor of white and blue opal cloud hid all the world. Miles sheer down, Chetudina Glacier, a very Gehenna of crevasses, plunged under it. We got not a glimpse of the Copper valley, nor at the two-mile-high crest of Mount Drum. Anyhow, what mattered panoramas? North all was clearer, by the twin hazy nubs and the thumb of Mount Zanetti, and Mount Sanford raised by mirage in an orange mist and tilted toward us like a reflection in a concave mirror. And—blessed that we had eyes to see it!—the broad shoulders of McKinley (magnetic west, exactly), like one lighted window of an invisible house of splendor on the uttermost horizon."

The Wrangel Mountains are regarded as separate from the Coast Range.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A SOUND OF GLACIERS.

**P**RINCE WILLIAM SOUND, or more properly Archipelago, covers twenty-five hundred square miles. It contains about fifty islands, most of which rise abruptly out of the water and attain heights varying from a thousand to three thousand feet. Montague, or Sukluk, Hinchinbrook, or Nutchek, and Hawkins Islands cut off the gulf from the Northern Pacific. Montague Island is forty-five miles long and six or seven miles wide. Its mountains like all the rest give evidence of glacial action. There are six long fjords separating tongues of mountainous land from the mainland with which they are generally connected by a narrow neck. Here the heights reach an elevation of five or six thousand feet and offer a wonderful variety of beautiful scenery. The sediment brought down by the various mouths or sloughs of the Copper River have made an area of mud flats in some places fifteen miles wide. The sail through the archipelago is most entrancing. Mr. Muir thought the view to the west one of the most enchanting he had ever seen: "Peak over peak, dipping deep into the sky, a thousand of them, icy and shining, rising higher, higher, beyond and yet beyond another burning bright in the afternoon light, purple cloud bars above them, purple shadows in the hollows and great breadths of sun-spangled, ice-dotted waters in front."

There are views of distant snow-capped mountains; the channel runs close to wooded shores with glimpses of meadows and glorious glades. Sometimes the abrupt shore towers almost overhead. Many of the fjords are filled with living glaciers; of the eleven principal ones the most remarkable is the Columbia, which is four miles wide

and three hundred feet high, situated on the western side of the entrance to Valdez.

“ In ordinary light,” says Mrs. Higginson, “ the front of the glacier is beautifully blue. It is a blue that is never seen in anything save a glacier or a floating iceberg — a pale, pale blue that seems to flash out fire with every movement. At sunset its beauty holds one spellbound. It sweeps down magnificently from the snow-peaks which form its fit setting and pushes out into the sea in a solid wall of spired and pinnaled opal which, ever and anon breaking off, flings over it clouds of color which dazzle the eyes. At times there is a display of prismatic colors across the front, which grow, fade, and grow again, the most beautiful rainbow shadings. They come and go swiftly and noiselessly, affecting one somewhat like Northern Lights — so still, so brilliant, so mysterious.”

All of the region of Prince William Sound is now a national forest preserve.

The town of Valdez was founded in 1898 and owed its prosperity to the traffic attendant on the Klondike hejira. That first year three thousand people sailed up through the exquisite Puerto de Valdes, at the upper end of the Sound and climbed along the glacier through the fastnesses of the cañon-streaked Chugatch to that enticing realm of gold. The canvas town was speedily replaced by one more substantial. Valdez has now a population of twenty-five hundred. The houses are small but comfortable and in some cases the old Russian's advice about artistic surroundings seems to have been followed. The climate is not more severe than that of Washington, D. C., and in summer there is a profusion of flowers. Though it is four hundred and fifty miles farther north than Sitka, its winter climate is only ten degrees colder and its harbor is open all the year. Strongly constructed piers are built out into deep water, the electric light is in universal use as well as the telephone. The town boasts of schools, churches and a hospital, two newspapers, hotels and restaurants, excellent shops, a brewery and factories, saw-mills and saloons, and many other adjuncts to civiliza-

tion. There are almost as many dogs as in Constantinople. The visitor first sees them waiting on the wharf. They know when the steamer comes, and hasten down to do the honors.

Valdez is situated on a level plain between two glacial streams that flow down lined with alders, cottonwoods, willows and other trees. Back of the city rises the dead glacier, slowly wearing away in its grave, sweeping down between glittering mountains. With plenty of time to spare one may take horses and follow the famous trail into the Tanana country. Ten miles out after an enchanting view of the Lowe River valley winding in its reaches of silvery stream a thousand feet below, one comes to Camp Comfort, where in the early days as many as seventy miners returning with gunny sacks filled with gold have slept at one time. Not all were so fortunate.

Beyond a goodly stretch of primeval forest the trail strikes the famous Keystone Cañon, the walls of which rise from twelve to fifteen hundred feet above the roaring river, and follows along on such a narrow ledge that a single misstep would precipitate horse and rider into dizzy depths. The men returning with empty pockets probably cared little to stop and contemplate the Bridal Veil Fall which leaps off into the cañon from a height of six hundred feet. From Wortman's roadhouse to the summit of Thompson Pass is a seven miles' jaunt and it is the proper thing to see the sun rise from that precipice. Unnamed and unnumbered peaks rise into the blue, all crowned with snow which takes on the most exquisite tints of pearly blue or pink. In every direction are valleys eaten out by dashing streams whose musical voices fill the silences. In summer there are vast reaches covered with vivid-hued flowers — violets, harebells, wild geraniums, anemones and buttercups.

Occasionally the trail dips into a level valley and then one has views of sweeping mountains from below. Heights of two miles perpendicular are not uncommon. One of the most impressive mountains thus seen from below is Mt. Drum, which is twelve thousand feet above the valley. The view from the summit of Sour-Dough Hill is claimed by

some to be unsurpassed in Alaska. From here one sees the majestic peaks of the Castle Mountains, rivers dashing thunderously down wild and sombre cañons, valleys filled to the brim with living glaciers, tremendous cascades taking their leap down into the polished sides of dark rock. Here one can see the whole length of the Kennicott glacier sweeping down for forty miles through the Kennicott Valley from Mt. Wrangel and Mt. Regal. Far to the south, dim in the distance, rise the peaks of the Coast Range—a marvellous wilderness of petrified billows.

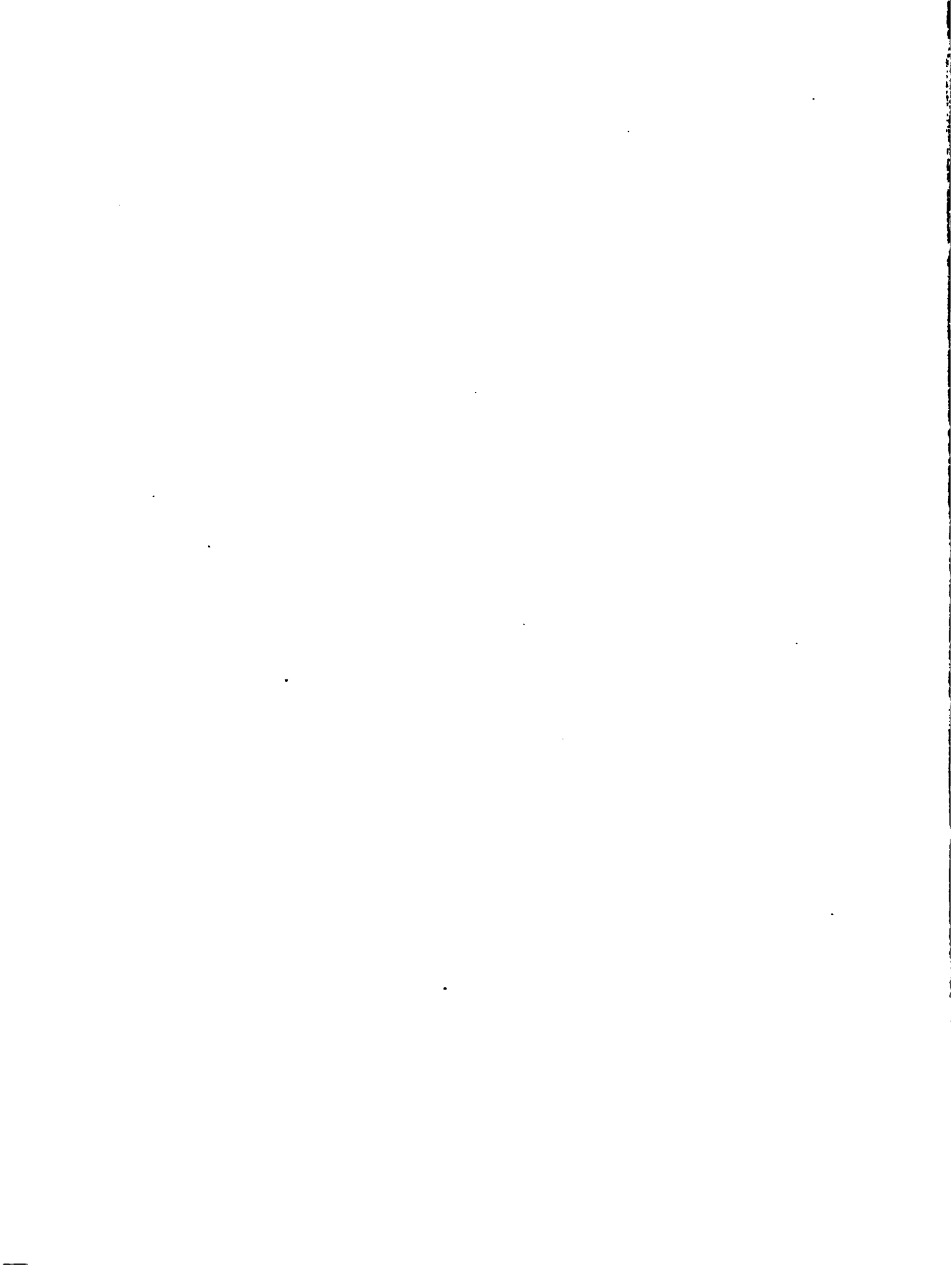
The valley of the Copper River and its tributaries has been pretty thoroughly examined by the Government geologists, and it is believed that it is rich not only in metals but in possibilities for thousands of small farmers who will raise all kinds of vegetables as well as rye and barley. Only a hundred and sixty miles from Valdez Daniel Kain with only a shovel took out in two days five ounces of coarse gold on the headwaters of Dan Creek which runs into the Nizina. It is noticeable that most of the rivers that flow into the Copper and into the Tanana bear their Indian names in contradistinction to the bays and sounds that were named by the early navigators.

The trail from Valdez leads to the richest copper mine so far discovered in Alaska. Reports of the presence of that metal had been brought in by Indians and others; but not until the summer of 1898 did any success attend the efforts of prospectors to locate it. Men who penetrated the Wrangel Mountains in 1899 by the route of the Kotsina River discovered the Nikolai mine in July, 1899, under the guidance of a native named Jack, who had a map made by Nikolai, chief of the Taral Indians. This mine came into the possession of the Chitina Exploration Company of San Francisco. That same autumn a party of ten men entered into an agreement to prospect in the interior, all property found to be held for their joint benefit. Among them was R. F. McClellan, who had discovered the Nikolai mine. All but two of the party separated for the winter. Two of them, Clarence Warner and Jack Smith, who remained in Valdez, started in March to climb



OLD RUSSIAN TRADING POST AT ALGANIK.





the trail into the interior. The snow was from six to ten feet deep and they were not able to make more than five or six miles a day even after almost superhuman exertions. When they reached the so-called McCarthy cache about fifteen miles east of Copper River on the trail to the Nikolai mine, they found that Indians had broken into it and stolen nearly all the provisions, amounting to several thousand pounds.

During the winter McClennan had made an agreement with the Chitina Company to work during the summer on the Nikolai mine. When he, in company with a number of men and horses, reached the McCarthy cabin he found Smith and Warner there. A great dispute immediately ensued and McClennan packed in all Smith and Warner's provisions to the Nikolai mine, which is situated on Nikolai creek about a thousand feet above the timber line. These two men set out in July with packs on their backs to prospect. After wandering aimlessly for two days they camped one noon near a small stream that came tearing down from the mountains. Warner happened to glance upward and saw something green. It could not be grass. With great exertion the two men managed to clamber up a hundred and fifty feet to the western slope of the ridge and there they came across a mass of ore cutting across greenstone and limestone and exposed for about four feet. It proved to be pure chalcocite or copper glance. They found solid masses of the ore from two to four feet across and fifteen feet long here and there. They were experienced miners and they knew the value of their discovery. Several tons were in sight. When it was analyzed it gave more than seventy per cent. of pure copper and fourteen ounces of silver besides a trace of gold.

This was the origin of the great Bonanza mine, the richest copper mine so far discovered in the Northwest. They were not allowed to claim it without a bitter fight. The lawsuit lasted several years and was one of the most dramatic ever fought out in the courts. Charges of bribery and corruption were freely made. It was finally decided in favor of the discoverers. Smith located another claim across Mc-

Carthy Creek and disposed of it for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

The Government trail from the Copper River, indeed from Valdez, has been pretty carefully laid out and is not at all difficult in the summer.

The Indians were accustomed to make use of a portage from their Chugach Bay to Cook Inlet, so close lie these two great bodies of inland waters, though by ship it is a voyage of several hundred miles.

The ordinary tourist does not go beyond Valdez in a summer excursion to Alaska, but if he desires he can take a steamer which sails about the middle of each month and visits some of the settlements to the westward. Separating the great Chugach Gulf from historic Cook's Inlet is the remarkable Kenai Peninsula. This peninsula is heavily wooded, the forests climbing its mountains to a height of two thousand feet, the timber being principally spruce with large areas of hemlock, birch and other trees. The land is fertile and the climate suitable for many kinds of agriculture. Berries abound and the hay crop is frequently abundant. The surrounding waters swarm with fish and the rivers are the home of the multitudinous salmon. Col. Caine, speaking of the scenery of the Kenai Peninsula, says:—

“The view was sublime. To our right the enormous glacier from which this branch of the Indian River issues filled up the whole of the head of the deep valley, the precipitous sides of which fell almost perpendicularly to its foot in cliffs a thousand feet high, till it met the sky line ten miles away. Beyond the gorge mountain after mountain stretched away as far as eye could reach with a glimpse between two peaks of another glacier.”

Even more enthusiastic is the naturalist, A. J. Stone, who visited the region in the interests of science:—

“It is a land of magnificent rugged mountains, and of beautiful rolling meadow lands; a land of eternal fields of glistening snow and ice, and of everlasting fires of burning lignite; of frozen moss and lichen-covered plains and of vegetation that is tropical in its luxuriance;

a land of extensive coal fields, smoking volcanoes, and of earthquakes so frequent as to fail to excite comment among its natural residents; of charming quiet bays and harbors, and of tides and tide-rips among the greatest in the world; of almost endless days in summer, and of gray dismal winter nights; of an abundant animal life both in the water and on the land. Nowhere else in the world does nature exert herself in so many ways as in the Kenai Peninsula. The waters, the mountains, the great rivers of ice, the vegetable and animal life all vie with each other in the production of something unusual and wonderful."

The principal town on the peninsula is Seward, situated on Resurrection Bay and designed as the terminus of the Alaska Central Railway. The town site was purchased of a pioneer family for four thousand dollars. It has all the aspect of a frontier lumber town. The business streets have a picturesque mélange of un-uprooted stumps, cabins made of birch logs, and more permanent edifices, such as churches, banks, a library and a hospital. There is a good wharf and a sufficient harborage which is open all winter. Here Baránof is said to have built his famous ship the *Feniks*.

The Alaskan Central Railway was projected to penetrate the rich mining region of the Tanana Valley and it was estimated that it would cost twenty-five million dollars. The route was to strike Turnagain Arm, where there are profitable gold mines, and then to follow up the valley of the Susitna. Passengers by this line would get a magnificent view of the Alaskan Range of mountains and particularly of Mt. McKinley, which lifts its snow-crowned head to a height of more than twenty thousand feet, being now recognized as the monarch of all American mountains, though not much higher than its neighbor Mt. Foster.

Dr. Cook describes the view from the top of McKinley, which he claims to have reached in company with Edward Barille.

"It was September sixteenth, the temperature sixteen degrees below zero, the altitude twenty thousand three hundred and sixty feet. The Arctic Circle was in sight; so was the Pacific Ocean. We were inter-

ested mostly, not in the distant scenes, but in the very strange anomaly of our immediate surroundings. It was ten o'clock in the morning, the sky was as black as that of midnight. At our feet the snow glittered with a ghastly light. As the eye ran down we saw the upper clouds drawn out in loose strings, and still farther down the big cumulus forms, and through the gap far below, seemingly in the interior of the earth, bits of rugged landscape. The frightful, uncanny aspect of the outlook made us dizzy. Fifty thousand square miles of our arctic wonderland was spread out under our enlarged horizon, but we could see it only in sections. Various trains of morning clouds screened the lowlands and eastward the lesser peaks. We could see the narrow silvery bands marking the course of the Yukon and the Tanana, while to the south, looking over nearby clouds, we had an unobstructed view. Mt. Susitna, one hundred miles away in a great green expanse was but a step in the run of distance. The icy cones of the burning volcanoes, Redoubt, Iliamna and Chirabora, the last two hundred miles away, were clearly visible with their rising vapors. Still farther the point of Kenai Peninsula, and beyond the broad sweep of the Pacific, two hundred and fifty miles away."

The railway has fallen into financial difficulties and beyond a distance of fifty-three miles exists only on paper. It is only a question of time when the great interests involved will necessitate its extension to Fairbanks. It would tap splendid spruce forests, the fine coals of the Matanuska, rich mines of gold and copper and serve an agricultural population that is certain to fill the fertile valleys under the Government homestead act which grants settlers farms of three hundred and twenty acres.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### SUMMERLAND.

**T**HE scenery of Cook's Inlet is almost as magnificent and varied as that of the Chugach Gulf. Cape Douglas is a most imposing promontory thrusting into the sea for several miles and then opposing a sheer bluff for a thousand feet. Between Cape Elizabeth and Cape Douglas the entrance is fifty miles wide. As it were guarding the bay stands the dead volcano of St. Augustine, a perfectly symmetrical cone, which rises to a height of three thousand feet, glittering with snow packed into every seam. Along the western shore is a chain of active volcanoes, the loftiest of which is Iliamna Peak, whose smoking crest rises to a height of twelve thousand and sixty-six feet. It is snow-clad to the top. It was last in eruption in 1854 but the evanescent smoke-wreaths curling around the steep summit make it evident that the internal fires are only slumbering. At its foot lies Iliamna Lake, the second largest body of fresh water in Alaska. It is perhaps seventy-five miles long and from fifteen to twenty-five miles wide. It drains into Bristol Bay on Bering Sea by the Kuichak River, and the salmon which seek its waters furnish material for one of the largest canneries in Alaska. Northeast from Iliamna is another volcano called by the Russians the Burning Mountain. It is mapped now as Redoubt. It rises to a height of eleven thousand two hundred and seventy feet and constantly sends up clouds of smoke. At its last eruption in 1867 the gray ashes were drifted over to islands more than one hundred and fifty miles distant. In 1902 it was pouring forth dense black smoke and vivid sheets of flame. Redoubt too has its lake. It bears the common name of Clarke and is long, though not so wide as Iliamna with

which it is connected by the Nogheling River. It is a paradise for hunters. On the Kenai Peninsula and along the Alaskan Range roam the fierce Kenai grizzlies. One may sometimes fall in with the fierce Kadiak brown bear which equals the grizzlies in ferocity and is the largest carnivorous animal known, often attaining a length of ten or twelve feet. There are also black and cinnamon bears. The stringent and excellent game laws<sup>1</sup> require a permit for hunters to kill them. The moose here attains the enormous weight of sixteen hundred pounds and with a spread of antlers of five or six feet. They are numerous in the wooded valleys of the Kenai Peninsula and on the sides of the Alaskan range. Deer, mountain goats and mountain sheep, wolves, foxes, caribou, and many other kinds of game abound. Colonel Caine declares this region one of the finest natural hunting grounds in the world.

A tremendous tide runs up Cook Inlet. As it narrows it rises and falls from twenty to twenty-seven feet and the natives, "the Cossacks of the sea" who are skilful in the use of their walrus-hide bidarkas, sometimes use the bore as a sort of marine toboggan slide. Big steamers touch only at Seldovia, which has no wharf, and at Homer, on the northern side of Kachemak Bay, where there is a good wharf. The town is practically deserted owing to the setback which coal mining received a few years ago. This subsidiary bay has coal mines and glaciers. Burroughs says of it:—"Grandeur looked down on it from the mountains around, especially from the great volcanic peaks, Iliamna and Redoubt, sixty miles across the inlet to the west."

To reach the upper end of the inlet and its finger-stretching arms one has to wait the pleasure of some small steamer which makes the trip at irregular intervals. Cook supposed the inlet that bears his name was a big river and when he found that the eastern branch was only a *cul de sac* he called it Turnagain. It is about thirty miles in length. The great river Susitna, which drains a region of eight thousand square

<sup>1</sup> Mr. McLain calls the game laws of Alaska cruel because they rob the Indians of a market for their furs during the season when they are most available.

miles and is navigable almost up to the flanks of Mt. McKinley, flows into the inlet two hundred and sixty miles from the entrance.

Vancouver describes the region bordering on the bays that variegate this great inland sea as "low, wooded, and rising with a gradual ascent, until at the inner point of the entrance when the shores suddenly rise to lofty eminences in nearly perpendicular cliffs, and compose stupendous mountains that are broken into chasms and deep gullies. Down these," he continues, "rushed immense torrents of water, rendering the naked sides of these precipices awfully grand; on their tops grew a few stunted pine trees, but they were nearly destitute of every other vegetable production."

The climate of this region is so balmy that the Russians called it Summerland. Fruits, vegetables and grain come to maturity and are delicious in flavor. Cows and hens flourish and one can always have good butter and eggs. The ultimate exploitation of the coal fields which will suffice for centuries for the whole Pacific Coast will assure the future of this wonderful Aleutian country. The opinion held by the Interior Department that all of these natural monopolies in coal should be retained by the Government for the benefit of the whole people is one that will assuredly commend itself to the judgment of our descendants who will have cause enough to regret the undemocratic concentration of these enormous treasures in the hands of a comparatively small part of the population. The oldest coal mine in Alaska is situated on the western shore of the inlet. It was worked by the Russians under the direction of German miners who ran a drift into the vein for seventeen hundred feet, but though they took out nearly three thousand tons the venture was not profitable, as the coal proved to be of too poor a quality for steamships.

All voyageurs agree as to the splendor of the scenery throughout this region. Mr. R. H. Sargent of the United States Geological Survey thus describes the view of the Alaska range of Mountains as seen from an elevation of about twenty-five hundred feet on the western slope of the Talkitna group: —



“ The day was perfect; not a cloud could be seen in the heavens. Below lay the broad, level valley of the Susitna River, beautifully carpeted in the deep green of the coniferae, while here and there a shining patch of light, outlining a lake, broke the monotony, and through the centre of it all the Susitna wound like a silver trail.

“ Across the valley, fifty miles away, the foothills of the Alaska Range rose, rugged, angular, and formidable, their cold, gray, serrated peaks often resembling clusters of spires; while back of them, dwarfing to the height of mere foothills in comparison, Mount Dall, Mount Russell and Mount Foraker stood like white-clad guardians to their chief. A sweep of the horizon from the south to the northeast, where the view was cut off by the adjacent mountains, gave the grandest panorama imaginable. Far away in the distance could be seen the volcanoes Iliamna and Redoubt, on the western shore of Cook Inlet, while at the other extremity Mount Hayes towered high above everything about it. Between these two the waving crest-line of the range was now painted in the green of a river valley, now cold, steel gray, as it outlined the lower peaks, gradually becoming whitened as it reached its crest, and then on through the same transition until lost to view.”

Southwest from the Kenai Peninsula, and on the same parallel as Sitka and the Pribilof Islands, is Kodiak, or Kodiak, next to Prince of Wales Island the largest of all the Alaskan islands. It was discovered in 1763 by Stepan Glottof, whose ship was fiercely attacked by the natives. As usual gunpowder triumphed. In 1784 Shelikof established his first trading-post at Three-Saints Bay on the southeastern shore. At that time he reported the natives as numbering fifty thousand. This was a gross exaggeration — probably there were not a tenth as many. They called themselves Kaniagmut. He described them as tall, healthy, and strong, generally round-faced, of light brown color, the hair black and prevalently bunched forward over the forehead and cut off at the eyebrows. Perhaps because of the delightful climate they were a braver, finer and more intelligent people than the other Aleuts. The Kodiak bears are also larger and fiercer

than any other of the Alaska flesh-eating mammals, and the moose grows there to colossal size. The island is a hundred miles long and about forty wide. Its mountains rise to a height of not more than five thousand feet and are smoothly rounded; the valleys are filled with luxuriant grass; there are no forests except on the Eastern end.

The tremendous convulsion of nature which separated Kadiak from the mainland seems to be turned into a myth by the native legend which relates how an immense otter trying to thread the waterways got caught and could not free himself. His struggles resulted in pushing the islands into the Pacific, leaving the straits that now bear the name of Shelikof.

Shelikof was obliged to subdue the natives by force. Great cruelty was practised in compelling them to hunt for the Russians. At the same time attempts were made to convert them. Here the first missionary work on the northwest coast was carried on. This was supplemented in 1796 by a school, opened by Father Juvenal, who reported the natives as deeply impressed though they did not understand the language of the service.

Baránof transferred the settlement to the northern end of the island and there in 1796 the first " Orthodox " Greek church was built. It is still shown with pride. It is painted white and is surrounded with a white fence and by trees. The steeple carries a chime of bells and is surmounted by the characteristic Russian cross with its three transverse bars, the lowest slanting. The interior is much less elaborate than the church in Sitka.

The great log warehouse in which the furs and stores of the Shelikof Company were kept is also a mute witness to the immensity of the transactions of those early days. The Northern Commercial Company still maintains one of its branches in the town and the residence which stands on a commanding eminence is a great centre of hospitality for visitors.

Visitors are always enthusiastic at the charm of Kadiak. John Burroughs calls it " bewitching " and breaks into a lyric strain in

praise of its emerald heights, flowery vales and vast green solitudes, "so secluded, so remote, so peaceful."

Mrs. Higginson can scarcely find adjectives enough: — She describes the clouds "like broken columns of pearl" that "pushed languorously up through the misty gold of the atmosphere," the long slopes of the hill-side vividly green and the acres of brilliant bloom.

"To one climbing the hill behind the village," she says, "island beyond island drifted into view, with blue waterways winding through velvety labyrinths of green; and beyond all, the strong, limitless sweep of ocean. The winds were but the softest zephyrs, touching the face and hair like rose petals, or other delicate, visible things; and the air was fragrant with things that grow day and night and that fling their splendor forth in one riotous rush of bloom. Shaken through and through their perfume was that thrilling, indescribable sweetness which abides in vast spaces where snow mountains glimmer and the opaline palisades of glaciers shine."

A short distance across from the town of Kodiak is Wood Island, where were once stationed the head-quarters of the American-Russian Ice Company, the ruins of the big buildings being still visible. The manager of the company lived in luxurious style and is said to have constructed the first road in Alaska. It skirts the island and is about thirteen miles long. There is a remarkably successful Baptist Orphanage for native children on this island. The girls are taught housework, the boys learn to do farming. The climate is such that although grain does not fill out, all vegetables thrive — potatoes averaging two hundred and fifty bushels to the acre — and it is a paradise for cattle. They raise angora goats and their dairy products are of the first quality. Wood Island has also a Greek Russian church and a mission.

At the mouth of the shallow Karluk River, which flows sixteen miles down into the Shelikof Strait, is one of the largest salmon canning factories in Alaska. It is provided with every labor-saving device. The whole operation is very interesting, but is conducted on such an enor-

mous scale that it makes the judicious tremble for the fate of the salmon.

The fish which swarm into this little river by the millions, making an almost solid stream, are caught in a net nine or ten feet wide and almost half a mile long paid out by a tug. One end is made fast; the other is hauled in by a windlass. When it has narrowed the enclosed area to a few hundred square feet, barges eighteen or twenty feet long and half as wide are brought along side and filled with a squirming, struggling mass of big salmon. These are emptied into bins and the butchers take them out and cut off their heads, fins and tails. Human labor became so skilful that a single man would thus treat three hundred an hour; but a recently perfected machine works far more expeditiously and with vastly less waste. An endless belt carries them to another machine which removes the scales, cuts them open and removes the entrails while a strong stream of water washes each one thoroughly. They are then inspected and if suitable are laid crosswise on an ascending series of parallel belts between which are placed rapidly revolving knives. These cut them into sections to fit the cans which are rammed full of fish, capped and soldered in one operation and at the rate of one a second. The cans are then heated to a temperature of two hundred and twelve degrees and kept so for about an hour. After this each can is punctured to allow the gases to escape and when it has been resoldered it is again heated for another hour at a temperature of two hundred and forty degrees. When it has cooled the Chinese expert tests it to see if it is air tight. He can tell by the sound. If the test is satisfactory the can is labelled and packed in cases. The value of the Alaskan salmon industry is not far from ten millions of dollars a year.

The law requires canneries to maintain salmon hatcheries. That at Karluk is regarded as one of the most successful and costs not far from twenty thousand dollars a year to support. It released one hundred and seventy-four millions of fry in 1906 and its output in 1908 was more than two hundred millions.

The hatchery consists of about a dozen ponds with a fall of from

four to six feet between them, fed by a small creek and by springs. The lower ponds are used for "ripening" the salmon. They are spawned by hand. Ten weeks after the fry are hatched they are fed with tinned salmon meat. When they are freed they make their way into salt water but do not travel far. At the end of the second year, if they survive their numerous enemies they are about eight inches long, take on bright scales, and are called "smolt." They pass out to sea between March and June and when they return in the autumn they are called "grilse" and weigh four or five pounds. The corrals in the lagoon of the Karluk River cover an area of about three acres. Here are taken the "stock-fish" for ripening. The hatching house contains a large number of troughs made of red-wood and treated so as to prevent all leakage. End to end they would extend nearly a thousand feet, and accommodate almost as many salmon. The view from the hatchery looking across Shelikof Strait to the snow-clad mountains of Alaska peninsula is particularly charming for those who like bold and wild scenery.

## CHAPTER XX.

### ROSARY EMERALDS.

**T**HE Aleutian Islands have been compared to "an emerald rosary on the blue breast of Bering Sea." Charles Sumner speaking of them in his great Alaska speech said that they stretched "far away to Japan as if America were extending a friendly hand to Asia." Kadiak has an attendant swarm of smaller islands, like a planet with moons. There are Afognak, Tugidak, Sitkinak, Malmot, Spruce, Chirikof and Semidi. Several of these islands have been preempted for the propagation of foxes. About the year 1894 the Semidi Propagation Company was organized to domesticate and raise foxes. The first fox farm was stocked from the Pribilof Islands. There are now between thirty and forty islands where this industry is carried on. The largest fox farm is on Long Island, one of the Kadiak group, where there are about a thousand blue foxes. It has been so far found impracticable to domesticate the larger and more valuable silver-gray fox. The islands utilized for this purpose are taken out from the provisions of the homestead laws. The industry is proving a godsend for the natives whose livelihood has been so injured by the ruin of the seal fisheries.

The steamboat that visits Kadiak strikes across southwest to the little canning town of Chignik on the mainland. The bay bearing the same name is defended by Tuliiumnit Point, sometimes called Castle Cape, from its resemblance to "turrets, towers and domes." Its enormous mass juts out into the sea, gray streaked with rose.

Still farther southwest are the Shumagin Islands, so named by Bering in honor of a Russian sailor who died and was buried on one of them. Five or six of them are quite large. Unga, which lies nearest the penin-

sula, has several settlements and trading-posts. The cod-fisheries extend from here in all directions. At Unga there is a Russian Greek church more interesting externally than within. At Apollo, three miles away, there is a productive mine owned by Californians. Sandy Point is notorious as the scene of a murder worthy of being told by Dostoyevsky. In a lonely house lived a man who had bought a young Aleutian girl for ten dollars and some tobacco. When she grew older, he abused her as if she were his wife. A Russian half-breed, named Gerasimof, fell in love with her and urged her to run away with him. She had not the courage. Gerasimof, seeing how she was maltreated, killed the brutal man while he was asleep. He was arrested and sentenced for life to the penitentiary on McNeil's Island. The girl, freed from terrible slavery, showed her gratitude by marrying another man within a year. The lonely house where the murder was committed is deserted; the people believe it to be haunted.

Directly west of Unga is Pavlof Bay, on which is situated the town of Bielkovsky, which was for many years the centre of the sea-otter trade. The most dangerous of the enterprises of the Aleuts was to catch this valuable little beast, for they frequent the wildest shores, disporting in the roughest surf, clinging to the long whipping fronds of the "sea-otter's cabbage" or nursing their young on the surface of the water. They are the shyest of sea-creatures. The natives, daringly approaching the shore in their bidarkas, used to spear them with ivory-headed spears. Sometimes a party of them would go out together, and if an otter were discovered they would combine to keep it under the water until it was drowned. The sea-otter cannot remain under water without breathing for more than twenty minutes. The moment it would put its head out, the Aleut, on the watch, would shout and scare it under again before it had a chance to breathe. This operation might take several hours. But the value of the beautiful brown fur, especially silver-tipped fur of the deep-sea otter, justifies all risk and all expenditure of time and effort. The sea-otter sought for by the richest people of Russia and China is now almost exterminated.

Bielkovsky has a Russian church and resident priest or *pop*. Its situation is delightful, the volcano not being too near, but it is said to need a Hercules to cleanse its Augean filth.

The long peninsula of Alaska, with its range of mountains and its serrated bays, its volcanoes and its numberless ponds draining into the icy waters of the northern seas, is separated by a very narrow pass from Unimak Island. On this are two active volcanoes, Shishaldin and Progomni. Mrs. Higginson goes into raptures over her first sight of Shishaldin as she saw it in the soft splendor of an Aleutian sunset:—

“ In the absolute perfection of its conical form, its chaste and delicate beauty of outline, and the slender column of smoke pushing up from its finely pointed crest, Shishaldin stands alone. Its height is not great, only nine thousand feet; but in any company of loftier mountains it should shine out with a peerlessness that would set it apart.

“ The sunset trembled upon the North Pacific Ocean, changing hourly as the evening wore on. Through scarlet and purple and gold, the mountain shone; through lavender, pearl, and rose; growing ever more distant and more dim, but not less beautiful. At last it could barely be seen, in a flood of rich violet mist, just touched with rose. . . . The sea breaks into surf upon Shishaldin’s base, and snow covers the slender cone from summit to sea-level, save for a month or two in summer when it melts around the base. Owing to the mists, it is almost impossible to obtain a sharp negative of Shishaldin from the water.

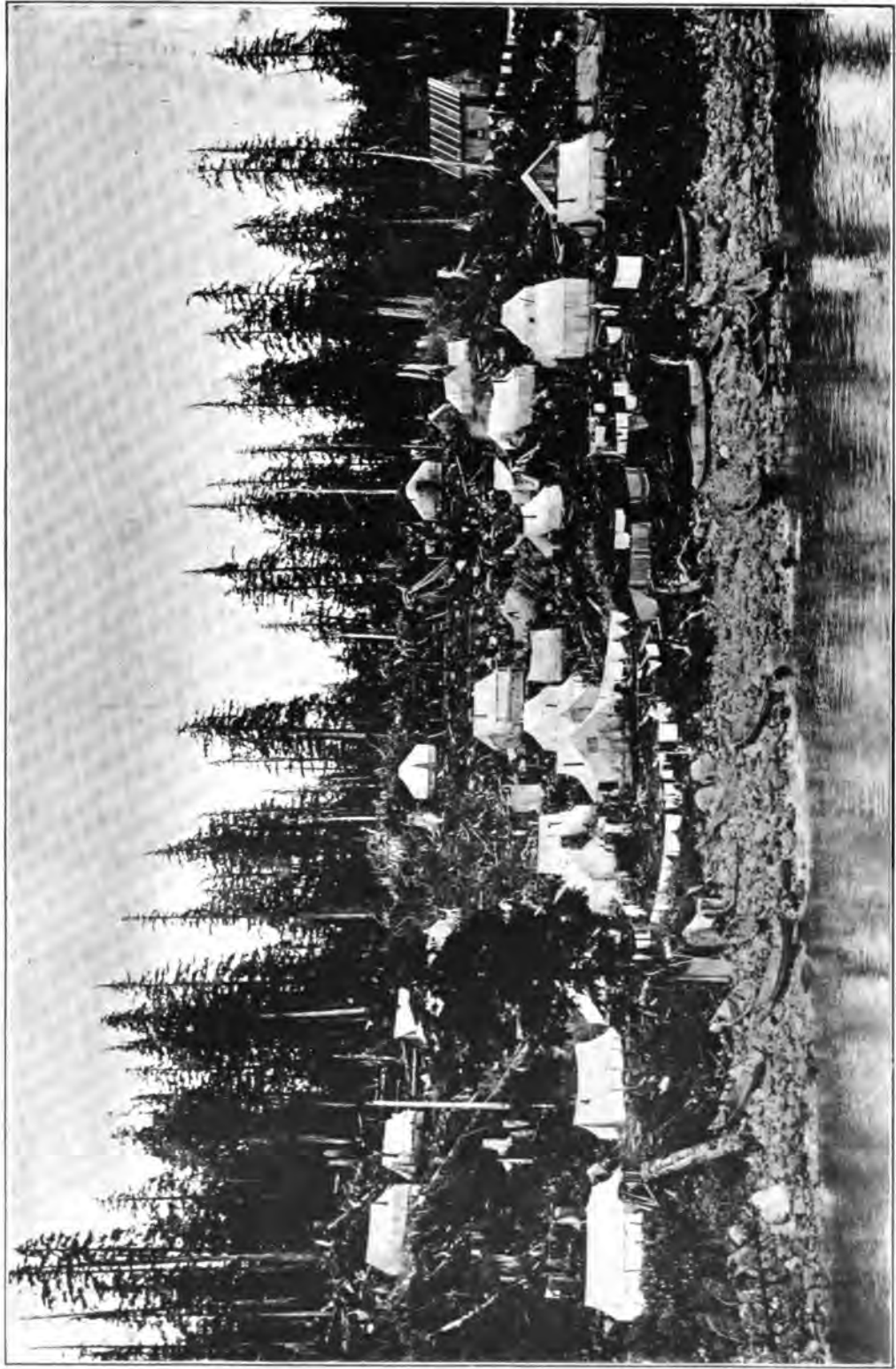
“ They played with it constantly. They wrapped soft-colored scarfs about its crest; they wound girdles of purple and gold and pearl about its middle; they set rayed gold upon it, like a crown. Now and then, for a few seconds at a time, they drew away completely, as if to contemplate its loveliness; and then, as if overcome and compelled by its dazzling brilliance, they flung themselves back upon it impetuously, and crushed it for several moments completely from our view.”

Ships from Nome have to go to the westward of Unimak Island by a broad pass separating it from Akun Island. Still another frequently used is Akutan pass which separates Akutan from Unalaska, the largest



of the hundred Aleutian Islands. Unalaska, which is spelled in a dozen different ways, and was originally Iliuliuk, means "curving beach." Unalaska belongs to the Lisui or Fox Islands. Its harbor is regarded as one of the finest in the world, being completely surrounded by lofty mountains and affording anchorage for the largest ships. The site of the Russian church is beautiful. Above it towers the mountain Maku-shin, with its flag of white steaming smoke. The bay contracts and then spreads out into an inland sea filling a deep valley in the island. Mrs. Higginson calls it "one great sparkling sapphire, set deep in solid emerald and pearl." In the vicinity of the volcano is a sulphur hot spring from which loud cannon-like reports are frequently heard, causing the natives to believe that the mountains were engaged in a dreadful war. Chirikof first discovered Unalaska in September, 1744. Stepan Glottof traded with the natives and found them friendly; he procured some black foxes and carried them to Kamchatka; but another Promuishlenik named Korovin, on attempting to settle there, was driven away. Glottof came to his assistance, but not until Soloviof appeared and massacred them mercilessly were they reduced to passive submission.

Captain Cook in 1778 visited Unalaska and exchanged courtesies with the Russian commander. The Russian settlement was at Iliuliuk and consisted of thirty Russians. They had a dwelling-house and two storehouses. Cook gave a good account of the natives, regarding them as the gentlest and most inoffensive people he had ever met with and patterns of honesty. He described them as of low stature, plump, and well formed, dark-eyed, and dark-haired. The women wore a single loose-fitting sealskin garment and deformed their lips with bone labrets. The men wore a garment made of bird-skins, feathers turned inward, and over this a translucent garment made of walrus gut. On their heads they wore "oval-snouted" caps, dyed in colors and decorated with glass beads. The natives lived in *barábaras* made of earth and stones filled into a frame-work of drift-wood or whale ribs, the whole covered with sods. The smoke escaped and the people entered



A NEW CAMP AFTER A GOLD DISCOVERY.



through a square opening in the roof, which was reached by means of a ladder or from the inside by a notched pole. Around the walls were low shelves covered with mats or skins and here the inhabitants sat or slept. Sometimes several of these *barábaras* were connected together and as they were occupied by a number of people and were warmed by rude oil lamps with grass for wicks, or by a smoking fire, the atmosphere may be imagined as beyond description. Their only tools were a knife and hatchet; their meagre household furniture consisted of a few bowls, spoons, cans, and baskets, and possibly a Russian pot or two.

They had not regular chiefs but their best huntsmen had the most influence and the greatest number of wives. The saintly Veniaminof charged them with an inclination toward sensuality which he confessed was increased by the bad example and worse teachings of the early Russian settlers who taught them to indulge in drunkenness. He recognized their good qualities, their patience under injury or offence, their honesty, their inward sensitiveness, their tenderness to their children, their truthfulness and simplicity, their hospitality and generosity.

This generosity seems to be characteristic of most of the Alaskans. Judge McKenzie tells a story which seems to illustrate it. At a settlement on the Koyukuk, nearly a hundred miles beyond the Arctic Circle, a poor old Kobulk called Peter saw a cartoon in which Uncle Sam was represented as barefooted. When he learned that it was a picture of the "great White Father" at Washington, he pointed to the bare feet and said: —

"No moccasins?"

"No," said the trader in whose store the cartoon was displayed, "Uncle Sam hasn't moccasins."

Peter looked distressed and went away without saying anything. A few days later he came back bringing a pair of moccasins and pointing to the cartoon said: —

"Moccasins: send Uncle Sam."

Unalaska was formerly a port of entry for all vessels entering or

leaving Bering Bay, the rendezvous for the Arctic whaling fleet and the anchorage for the American and British gunboats that were after illicit sealers. During the early days of the Klondike excitement hundreds of miners landed there while waiting for transportation to the Yukon. There is a large Russian church with which a successful parish school is connected. The only white women resident in the village are at the Jessie Lee Home, a Methodist mission which has accomplished much in training the young people for useful work.

Unalaska furnishes excursions of unusual interest. About two miles away, reached by a fascinating walk, is Dutch Harbor, formerly called Lincoln Harbor, where the North American Company has a station with framed cottages, all painted white with red roofs, neat and prosperous and prosaic! Only a few miles away is the neat little village of Biorka on the shores of Samganuda or English Harbor, where Captain Cook anchored and repaired his ships. On the western coast, thirty miles away, is Makushin Harbor, where Glottof first landed. The view from the summit of the volcano is magnificent. It is not a difficult climb.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### A MOUNTAIN OF FIRE.

**D**IRECTLY west of Unalaska, directly north of the neighboring island of Umnak, is the marvellous and ever changing ocean volcano named after Saint John the Evangelist — Ioann Bogoslof. It was originally an isolated rock famous among the Aleuts as a populous resort for seals and sea-lions. In 1795 a peculiar fog seemed to hang over this rock and filled the natives with a vague alarm. A bold seal hunter approached the rock with the design of catching some sea-lions. He returned in haste, reporting that the sea around the rock was boiling hot and the supposed fog was steam. No one any longer dared go there for fear of spirits. After a long time the fog cleared away and a high peak was discovered with smoking top. In 1806 natives so far conquered their terror as to approach it in their bidarkas and they reported that melted stone was running down the sides.

The resident agent of the Russian-American Company witnessed the first eruption from the northern shore of Umnak. A storm occurred, but when the weather moderated a column of fine rock dust rose high in the offing. At night there appeared such a bright glow or incandescence that it was almost as light as day. Stones were hurled into the air and some fell on Umnak. At sunrise the cause of the disturbance was seen: — a new black island which looked like a cap.

Four years later it had ceased smoking but eight years after that the ground was still so hot that the sea-lions could not walk on it. In 1817 it was estimated to have attained a circumference of two miles and a half and a height of three hundred and fifty feet. The natives called it Agashagok.

In 1820 smoke but no fire was seen; it was haunted by sea-lions. The circumference was about four miles; its height five hundred feet. Others gave its height as twenty-five hundred feet. Tebrakof (in 1832) thought its altitude was fifteen hundred feet. Dall in 1873 set its height at eight hundred and fifty feet. It was rapidly disintegrating.

In September, 1883, Captain Anderson of the schooner *Matthew Turner* passing saw the new volcano in active eruption throwing out heated rock, smoke, steam, and ashes, some of them from fissures beneath the level of the sea. A month later the schooner *Dora* was passing and her captain, whose name was Hague, approached within a mile, noting the black smoke as if from burning tar mixed with flames and red hot rocks. That same month volcanic dust fell heavily at Unalaska. The new volcano proved to be a larger island than Bogoslof. Mr. Dall named it Grewingk after the Russian explorer. Its steep cone rose to a height of perhaps twelve hundred feet. In 1884 the revenue steamer *Corwin* reached the vicinity and four men were detailed to go ashore and investigate. They put the height of the new volcano at five hundred feet or less. They found it impossible to climb the peak owing to the heat and the sulphurous fumes. The cone was covered with a thin layer of ashes crusted by rain. The explorers sank ankle deep through the crust and were choked by the impalpable dust. The temperature half way to the top was one hundred and ninety degrees. A thermometer made to register two hundred and sixty degrees exploded when put into a crevice. The two islands were connected by a spit from which rose a tower-like rock eighty-seven feet high. Barnacles on its side showed that it had been recently elevated.

A week later Lieutenant M. Stoney of the United States Navy spent several days in the vicinity taking soundings and making observations. He recorded many earthquake shocks, as well as rumbling sounds and a roar like distant cannon. The summit was hidden by masses of black and whitish smoke and the sea seemed to be boiling.

In 1885 Captain Healy of the *Corwin* reported that the summit from

the north end was enveloped in a bright sulphurous light which shone out against the sky and made a wonderfully impressive spectacle.

Prof. C. Hart Merriam saw it in 1891 from the *Albatross*. He says:—

“The night was densely foggy, as usual in Bering Sea in summer, and the early morning brought no change. The ship was feeling her way cautiously with no land in sight, when suddenly, about seven o'clock, the fog lifted and we saw, directly ahead and hardly a mile away, the bold front of the new volcano. We felt a thrill of excitement, as the precipitous cliffs of the northern end broke through the fog, followed by a fierce rush of escaping steam, whose roar, when the engines stopped, drowned all other noises, not excepting the cries of the myriads of seabirds which swarmed about the rocks like bees about a hive.” The steamship ran aground on a reef which rose precipitately out of twenty fathoms of water, but backing off successfully anchored in the bay on the east side. Prof. Merriam thought the island did not in any way suggest a volcano, there being no cone and no true crater. But there were cracks and crannies and great fissures from which sulphurous steam was issuing with a deafening roar. In 1895, the island had decreased in height, its top had become greatly flattened and the spit connecting the two had disappeared. This rock, whose history has been known for one hundred and twenty years since it was first described in 1768 as a huge rock, fell in 1888 or 1889 and in 1890 its site was marked by a cluster of small islands or shoals.

The changes that take place at Bogoslof are so bewildering that it is safe to say no two visitors ever see it alike. By the end of the last century the island had so cooled that animal life was again abundant there. The cliffs were filled with the black-headed, white-bellied murre laying their eggs in every cranny. Professor C. Hart Merriam gives an animated description of the visit which he and some of his crew made to the eastern spit in July, 1899. A large number of sea-lions had congregated there. As the boat drew near the shore they grew restless and alarmed. The cows took to the water; the bulls roared and moved



down to the beach. Several big yellow bulls, "big as oxen and much longer" came toward the boat, bellowing fearfully. Others stood and roared, surging their huge heads. "Most of the young, accompanied by more than one hundred cows and as many bulls, took refuge in the pond near the shore. They were now thoroughly frightened and rushed through the shallow pool in wild confusion, making the water surge and boil and throwing the spray high in the air. Finally, as if by concerted action, all of the old sea-lions made a break for the far side of the pond and stampeded for the sea, where another absorbing scene was being enacted.

"Dozens of adults, apparently cows and middle aged males, were sporting like porpoises in the breakers, moving side by side in schools of six or eight, and shooting completely out of the water. These small squads behaved like well-drilled soldiers, keeping abreast, breaking water simultaneously, making their flying leap in the air side by side, and taking the next water together. This they repeated again and again, evidently finding it great sport. It was a marvellous sight and one to be long remembered."

In 1907 the two peaks had become four and in August a violent earthquake was followed by an eruption which was so violent that ashes fell as far north as Nome, and covered the decks of passing vessels to the depth of several inches. The whaler *Herman* was passing the Bogoslof Islands on September first and the captain and crew saw the third peak disappear before their very eyes, while vast columns of steam ascended miles into the air and the water boiled like a tea-kettle. Earthquake shocks were felt as far as Sitka and new rocks came to the surface all along the Aleutian coast.

This year very great changes were reported; the water around the islands was so hot as to be unbearable. The rise and transformation of these volcanic islands is thought to throw a bright light on the formation of the whole Aleutian group of islands and mountains. They are evidently all volcanic and have been thrown up within recent geologic periods. Certainly nothing since the eruption of Krakatoa and

the destruction of Pélée has been more instructive as regards the building of the world than the birth of Bogoslof and Grewingk. Beyond Umnak the Aleutian Islands in three groups — the Andreanof, the Islands of the Four Mountains, and the Rat Islands — still stretch out into the Northern Pacific. The very last in the group is called Attu. Here, and at Atka, largest of the Andreanof group, are made the baskets most prized by connoisseurs. Attu was discovered in 1745 by a reckless sea-otter huntsman, Mikhail Novidskof, who, in a small open boat, made his way across those dangerous seas from the next Kamchatkan group. The next step was the longest — the wide passage from the Blizhni or Near Islands of which Attu is the largest across to the Rat Islands. From there the course eastward was comparatively simple, one island being easily visible from the other.

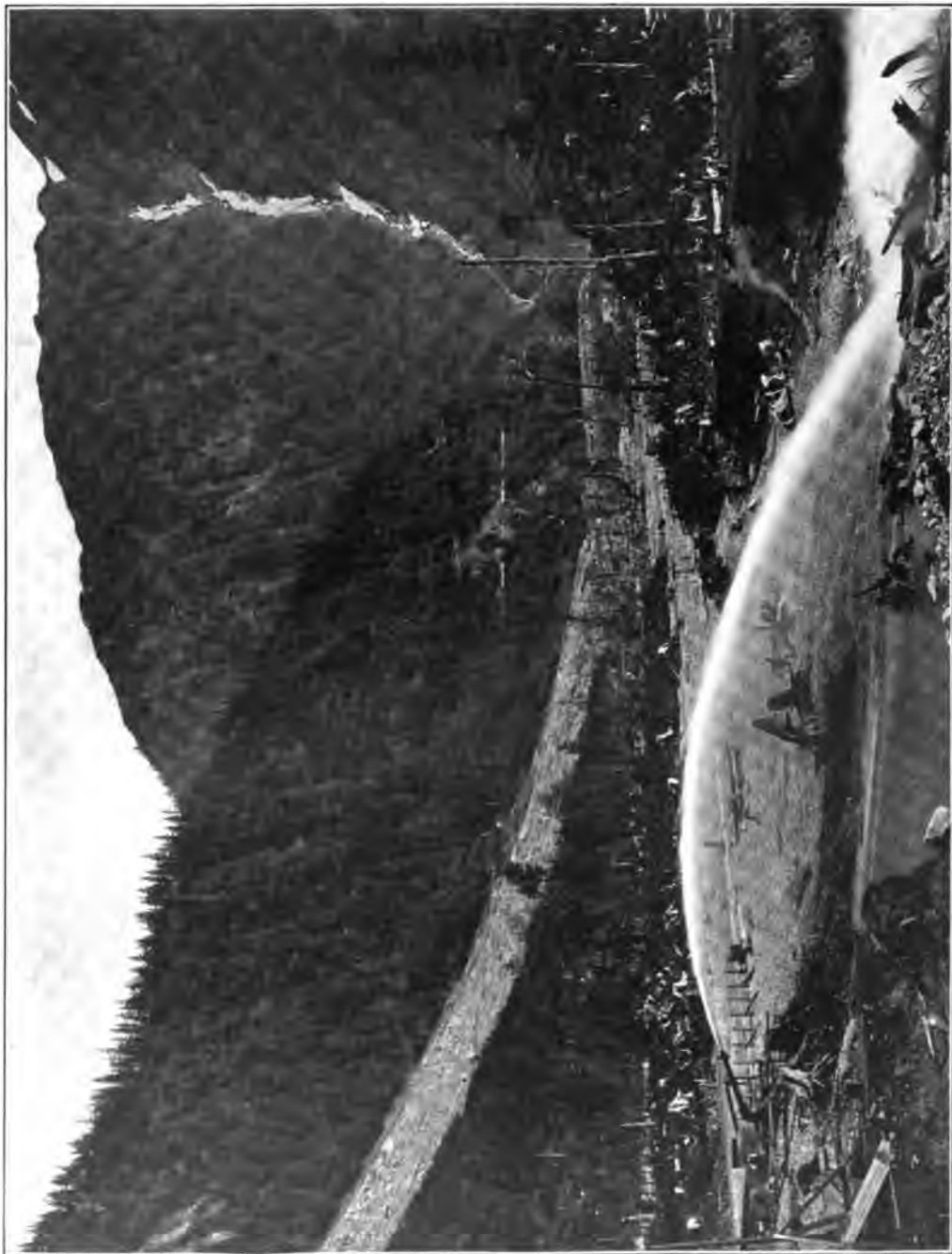
In those early days it was estimated that the Aleutian Islands had a population of perhaps thirty thousand. At the beginning of this century it is regarded as doubtful if there are fifteen hundred all told. In 1865 there were known to be in the eighteen hundred miles between Unalaska and Attu only three small native settlements aggregating less than five hundred natives with six or seven white men. As the Kuro Siwo, called the Black Current, because it is darker than the ocean through which it flows, reaches these groups of islands it greatly modifies the climate. Part of it turns to the eastward and carries with it the warm moist atmosphere which makes the climate of Alaska so foggy and favorable to green vegetation, at the same time condensing on the mountains forms the tremendous snowfall so favorable for the growth of glaciers; the other part passes northward into the Bering Sea, often carrying with it large icebergs. The average winter climate of the Aleutian Islands, though it corresponds to the latitude of Labrador, is above freezing. For the six colder months, from October to March, the mean temperature at Unalaska is slightly above thirty-four. On the other hand the July temperature at the same place averages only fifty. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that in the days to come the former haunts of this peaceable, patient race

will be again populous, that the thousands of miles of coast, so free from ice-blockade, may be lined with prosperous cities and towns, and that a new civilization may be built up, conditioned by the soft atmosphere of the misty Aleutian chain.

Mr. N. H. Castle who has lived in Alaska for many years has this to say of its climate:—

“ With the lengthening of the days, the sun’s visible journey becomes longer and longer until it reaches its maximum; the winter’s snow melts fast before its ever and rapidly increasing intensity. The willows, tentatively, thrust forth delicate foliage. Clear water appears in the streams between the disrupted surfaces of the ice and rivulets of melted snow add their quota toward its ultimate effacement. Life and motion seem to affect even inanimate bodies. Around the bends of the larger watercourses, slowly, almost majestically, turning, twisting, upheaving, rending, grinding one upon the other, floe after floe, floe over floe, floe under floe, covering the entire width from bank to bank, the masses above meet the masses below, the irresistible impact of millions of tons carries everything before it to the open sea. Perhaps the ice gorges in the river; the tremendous weight meets a formidable but temporary obstruction and surge follows surge, heaping up a seemingly impenetrable wall; huge blocks are tossed far up on the shore, discolored masses rent from the river’s bed mingle with the clear ice that has suffered no contamination with earth, the water backs behind the surging, unquiet barrier and overruns its ordinary limits, until, bursting with a roar, the magnificent array again proceeds upon its course with its toll of uprooted trees and crumbled banks.

“ Such is the break-up, the great spectacular feature of the Northland. Yet season after season the ice may melt where it forms, or pass quietly away in small floes and disappoint the expectant sightseer by its lack of ostentatious display. Soon the only snow visible will be the scattered patches upon the hillsides and these may remain until the intervening spaces are filled by a fresh downfall. The stretches of tundra are dotted with miniature lakes and in places have the appear-



HYDRAULIC MINING IN ALASKA.



ance of carpets of graduated shades of green, interspersed with blotches of purple, to the delight of the impressionist.

“ Then the vegetation seems to spring up before one’s very eyes, as if it must do its utmost in its short season of freedom after long imprisonment. Grasses appear spontaneously; snapdragons, the wild rose, columbines, buttercups, larkspur, violets blue and violets yellow, forget-me-nots, bluebells, marigolds and hundreds of other varieties of wild flowers mature in tropical luxuriance. Wild oats and barley give abundant promise of the day to come when we of the North shall raise our own cereals. Berries in profusion cover the ground. The deciduous trees assume a brilliant foliage and the sombre tints of the evergreens are tipped with brighter shades. Geese and crane, wild ducks and swans, snipe and plover, in countless thousands return from their winter wanderings and other feathered harbingers of spring gladden the eye and ear, and themselves apparently rejoice to return to their chosen summer resort.

“ As to heat, clear and foggy days, wind and other elemental characteristics, the Alaskan summers vary largely. In June, July and August the thermometer ranges between one hundred and the forties. The precipitation varies from year to year; sometimes the rain falling in cloudbursts, raising the creeks, destroying dams and works and inflicting great damage, while in other seasons light rains may maintain a fair average of water for mining purposes; again, dry years may disappoint the miner no less than the agriculturist in other climes.”

## CHAPTER XXII.

### OUR IMPERIAL DOMAIN.

**T**HE Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition which was held at Seattle during the summer of 1909 undoubtedly opened the eyes of thousands of people to the immense importance of our far north-western territory so long neglected and abused. General Greely calls attention to the fact that as lately as 1905 a foot note to an article in a prominent magazine stated that the vast region of Alaska "is inhabited by a few savages and is not likely ever to support a population enough to make its government a matter of practical consequence."

This utterly ridiculous statement apparently was allowed to pass unprotested. The ever-increasing tide of summer travel along the north-western coast where as Mr. John Burroughs says, "day after day a panorama unrolls before us with features that might have been gathered from the Highlands of the Hudson, from Lake George, from the Thousand Islands, the Saguenay, or the Rangeley Lakes in Maine, with the addition of towering snow-capped mountains thrown in for a background," alone brings millions of dollars of traffic to the steamboat companies and the Alaskan towns. The compound interest on the cost of Alaska for twenty-five years was estimated by a treasury agent as twenty-three million seven hundred and one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two dollars. If to this be added the expense of the Army and Navy Department the total cost he reckoned as more than forty-three millions, and he advised abandoning the territory. General Greely prints an instructive table showing the aggregate value of furs, fisheries and minerals between 1868 and 1908. The totals amounted to three hundred and twenty-seven million six hundred and fifty-one thousand one hundred and ninety-six dollars. Had not the selfish exploi-

tation of the fur-bearing animals resulted in such ruin to this industry the amount would have been far greater. General Greely estimates that the possible gold output of the Seward Peninsula will reach a value of three hundred millions, of the Tanana water-shed a hundred millions, and other fields as yet untouched and unexplored will bring the mining districts up to a value of five hundred millions, while the coal-tonnage of the territory is estimated at fifteen thousand millions of short tons. And besides this there are possibilities of petroleum, lead, gypsum, marble, iron, quicksilver, graphite, and hosts of other natural products as yet scarcely touched by the prospector. Then there are the actual values of eleven incorporated cities, amounting to fifteen or twenty millions more. Railways, telegraphs and hydraulic ditches have cost up into the millions and the imports and exports represent also almost fabulous sums. When the mineral resources begin to dwindle probably Alaska will go through the same experience as did California: agriculture will be found to outweigh her gold production a score of times.

But even if these roseate visions of future wealth from the soil and the earth be not realized, Alaska is going to be more and more the playground of the world. Nowhere else is there such a voyage possible as from Seattle to Skaguay. It was made in the summer of 1909 by two professors and a student in a twenty-four foot naphtha launch uncovered. For two thousand miles, nearly all the way sheltered behind beautiful wooded islands and with marvellous vistas of beauty and magnificence unrolling before them they made their way into this region of enchantment.

As yet Alaska is practically an unknown country. Our imaginary voyage has only skimmed the edge as it were. At the present time the United States and Canada are engaged in the foolish and unfortunate business of marking an imaginary boundary between Alaska and the Dominion. As there is no material division between these two countries, as there is free trade between Maine and California, so there should always be free trade between the United States and its northern



neighbor. What is to the interest and advantage of the one should be to the interest and advantage of the other. A good proof of this is given by Dr. J. H. Moore, chairman of the meeting of the Arctic Brotherhood in July, 1909, when a beautiful building was presented to the University at Seattle. The speaker, after giving a humorous account of the accidental formation of the Society in 1897, on a ship bound north, — a society which now numbers more than seven thousand members — said: —

“ Our banner is a story in itself. We had all Americans for members at first, but soon we began to take in Canadians. We were all for having the American flag in the banner, but then, because of the Canadian members, we thought it only fair to have the Union Jack in also. Both flags are combined in the banner.

“ All that time there was considerable friction over the boundary line. This dispute suggested the motto on our banner, ‘ No boundary line here.’ ”

As it is, however, a gallant company of skilled men are at the present time engaged in marking a boundary line twelve hundred miles long. First there are six hundred miles from the Portland Canal up the coast to Mt. St. Elias and then six hundred miles from there north to the Arctic Ocean. Mr. Thomas Riggs, Jr., the chief of this part of the United States Alaskan Boundary Survey, says: —

“ All the land lying along the boundary must be mapped on an accurate scale and a strip of topography four miles wide must be run the entire length of the one hundred and forty-first meridian; peaks which cannot be climbed, or rather which would take too long and would be too expensive to scale, must be determined geodetically; vistas twenty feet in width must be cut through the timbered valleys; and monuments must be set up on the routes of travel and wherever a possible need for them may occur.”

The labor thus involved is almost unimaginable. Rivers of icy water have to be crossed and mounted, vast glaciers have to be conquered, heavy instruments have to be carried, swamps and unbroken wilder-

nesses swarming with bloodthirsty mosquitoes have to be penetrated, provisions have to be looked after. During one single season the two parties located main points on the boundary for eighty-five miles, completed seventy-seven miles of triangulation, a topographical belt sixty-five miles long, cut forty miles of vista, ran two hundred and fifty miles of levels and established seventeen monuments of aluminum bronze, each five feet high and set in a concrete base weighing three quarters of a ton.

While this is going on along the inward boundary the Coast Survey has been awakened to the need of surveying the coast. Owing to its sinuosities, that signifies making careful maps of a coast line estimated at twenty-six thousand miles. The season is short, lasting only from May to October, and during this time there are always a great many annoying interruptions, the storms that suddenly come up, and the fogs that are so prevalent on the northwest coast.

As yet the charting of the bays and inlets is very imperfectly done; there is a great lack of suitable lighthouses and buoys; ships that navigate those waters run the risk of striking hidden rocks, rocks too that may have been recently thrown up by some subterranean convulsion. But the time is coming when this great and necessary work will be completed and the channels and bays from Seattle to Point Barrow will be as perfectly known as those of the Atlantic coast.

Each year a larger number will learn about this magical territory; each year new bands of tourists will seek its marvellous panorama of glittering mountains and its rivers of flexile ice. No one who ever goes to Alaska fails to be impressed with the majesty of nature there displayed, and to rejoice that fifty years ago there were a few statesmen far-sighted enough to see the possibilities of that distant boreal land. All honor to Seward and Sumner and the rest of the devoted congressmen who put that splendid measure through in spite of the opposition of purblind, narrow-minded Ignorance!

THE END.









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